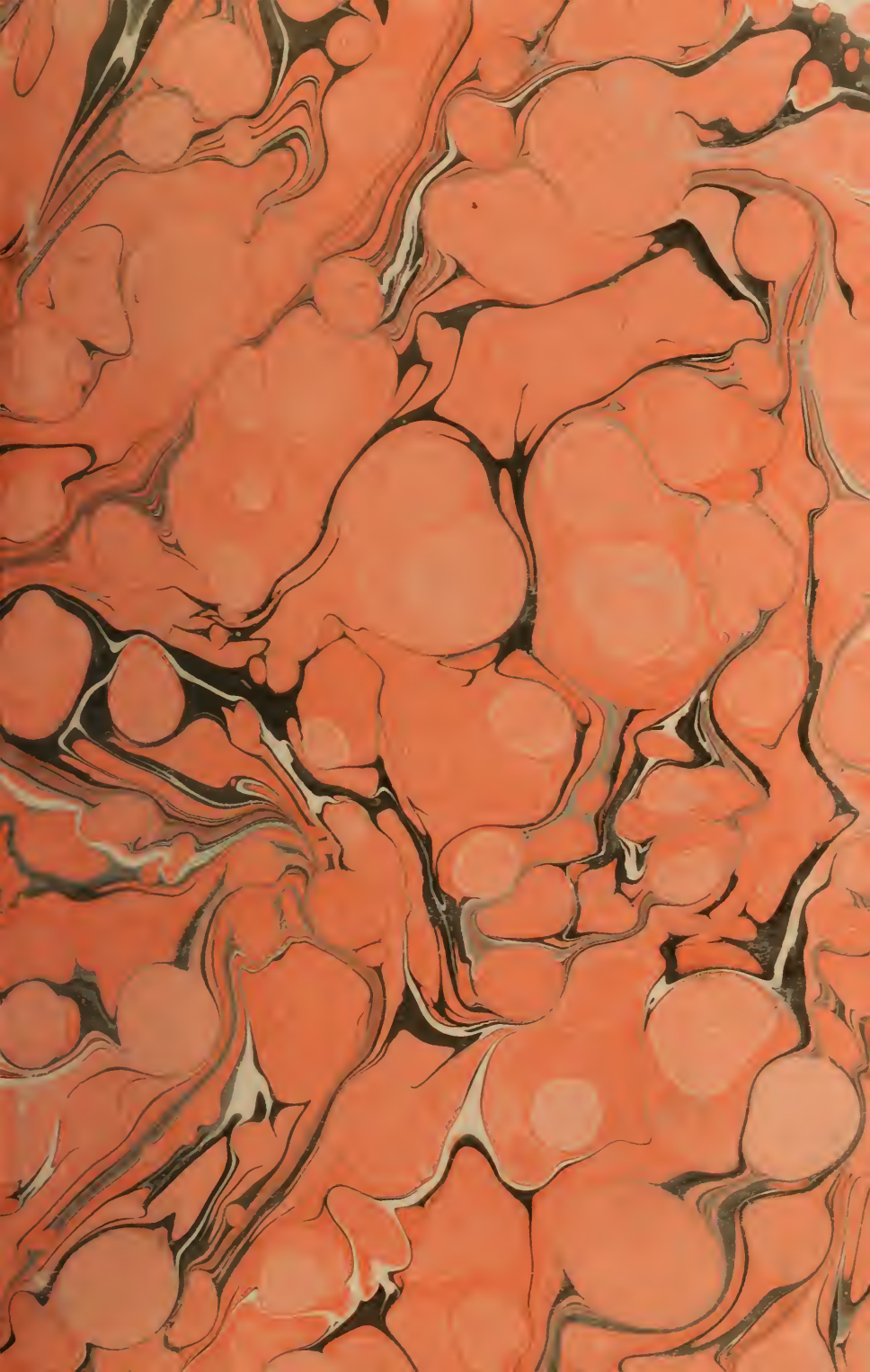

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CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

EFFECTS

OF

PROTECTING DUTIES.

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PROTECTING DUTIES.

IN A LETTER TO A NEWLY-ELECTED MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

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CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE EFFECTS OF

PROTECTING DUTIES,

IN A LETTER TO A NEWLY-ELECTED MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT,

SIR,

YOU are now arrived at that period of your life, and at that ſtation among your countrymen, in which the determinations of your mind, and the conduct which thoſe determinations will lead you to adopt, muſt neceſſarily become of importance to thoſe around you. I have been ſufficiently acquainted with the courſe of your ſtudy, to know that you are not deficient in capacity, and that the mode of your education has in ſome degree, ſettled you into habits of diligence. My apprehenſions for you are not built upon theſe foundations; they ariſe from my knowledge of the nature of that ſtock of ideas which you have acquired, and of the particular turn of thinking in which you have been trained. My fears are, that all which you have hitherto acquired, altho' it may, and in truth I believe will, prove of ſome ornament to you as a Gentleman, can have but ſmall force in forwarding you as a man of buſineſs.

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The hiſtorians of Rome have not handed down to us any conſiderable details of the commercial ſyſtems of the old world; nor does the reaſoning of Demoſthenes apply itſelf much to the *policy* of *trading nations* Yet it is ſomething to have been in the habit of acquiring. A mind accuſtomed in this manner to furniſh itſelf with the ideas of other men, will more readily gain upon any ſubject however novel it may be, than one which has to acquire its materials for thought and its habits of thinking together.

Of all the knowledge which you can poſſeſs, the knowledge of commerce in its general principles and in its detail of facts, will prove of moſt honour to yourſelf, and of moſt profit to your country. The time at which this knowledge muſt prove moſt ſingularly beneficial, will be during the preſent ſeſſion of parliament. And during the preſent ſeſſion of parliament, no queſtion of commerce can ariſe which will involve ſo much of the riſing proſperity of the kingdom, as that which will come in the firſt inſtance before you for determination———*the queſtion of protecting duties.* In the deciſion of this queſtion will be laid the foundation of the commercial ſyſtem of Ireland. You perceive then how you are preſſed, ſcarcely any thing as yet known, and almoſt every thing to be inſtantly decided; this at once then ſhews you my inducement, and conſtitutes my apology.

The ſpirit of the Iriſh nation has been already tried; its wiſdom muſt ſhortly be diſcovered. To part after the poſſeſſion of liberty, is the effect of an univerſal feeling in human nature; it has fallen to the lot of few to enjoy it—but it has fallen to the lot of fewer ſtill to enjoy it to its true purpoſes; to render that activity which it inſpires ſubſervient

to

to the ſatisfaction of life, to the augmentation of its enjoyments, and to the mitigation of its ſufferings. The moment of the acquiſition of liberty, is a moment of danger to any country. The people from that period will be active: but the activity of unſkilfulneſs may impoveriſh and diſgrace a nation as well as an individual.

IGNORANCE may preſerve liberty———but it will be liberty in tatters: knowledge only can preſerve and enjoy her in the complications and refinements of civil ſociety. For three millions of people to eſtabliſh their freedom, it is only neceſſary that they ſhould unite in a determination to be free. The dulleſt head in ſociety may contrive, and the weakeſt hand aſſiſt the execution of ſuch a purpoſe. To overpower an union of this nature would never pay for the exertion which it would require. But after the object of that union has been attained, a nation will require every aſſiſtance that natural ſagacity and acquired information can afford. In proportion as a national ſpirit has been rouſed, it becomes neceſſary for caution to ſtep in to regulate its progreſs.

To acquire the power of being happy, and to apply that power to its object, demand very different modifications of the paſſions, and very different exertions of the underſtanding. Common place hiſtory affords us examples, and common experience confirms the truth of them, that to obtain a victory, and to enjoy the *profits* of that victory, are too often ſeparated.

WE have conquered. Let us now endeavour to be happy. To be happy as a nation, I mean to be induſtrious and to be rich. I am not for the Spartan profits of victory. Iron money, and black

bread, could afford but ſmall inducements to an Iriſhman, who, in the moſt deplorable moments of the depreſſion and poverty of his country, has contrived to keep a part of its beef for his own conſumption, and to exchange another part of it with his neighbour for claret.

The inſtitutions of commerce are of all others, the moſt pernicious, or the moſt beneficial; their effects are always more extenſive, they penetrate farther into the general buſineſs of life, and mingle themſelves more completely in the general maſs of our tranſactions, than any other branches of political œconomy. Other inſtitutions are leſs frequently called forth into action. The rules of landed property, for inſtance, cannot operate ſo extenſively. It is not every hour that land changes its maſter. Every man in the community is not a land owner; but every man in the community eats, drinks, and wears cloaths; and is hourly engaged in the increaſe, conſumption, or exchange of thoſe neceſſaries of his life. In proportion as commercial inſtitutions extend in their effects, theſe effects become more minute and numerous. To aſcertain therefore and arrange them, to trace them through their different ſtages up to their true cauſes, mixed and perverted as they are by the ingenuity of pride and avarice, require a greater ſhare of patience, and of ſkill in the ordinary courſes of buſineſs, than can fall to the ſhare of many.

To diſcriminate and to arrange, require in ſome degree a ſcientific education. To collect commercial materials for ſuch purpoſes, requires long attention and a cloſe inſight into various branches of buſineſs. To be a man of ſcience, and at the ſame time a man of buſineſs, requires a rare combination of endowments. The ſtudent ſeldom

treats

treats the workſhop with any civility. Experience, that ſafeſt guide in moſt other reſearches, tho' it may be of ſome uſe, yet certainly cannot afford us a view ſufficiently entenſive in this enquiry. This is a ſubject on which experiment cannot well be hazarded: the expences to ſociety are too great, the conſequences not ſucceeding, too fatal. Beſides that the length of a life will hardly afford time to draw a concluſion: we are born too late to ſee the beginning, and we die too ſoon to ſee the end of many things. Cautious as we ought to be, we muſt however truſt ſomething to information. We cannot collect all ourſelves, we muſt therefore be content at ſome time to make uſe of the labours of others.

It is a circumſtance to be lamented, that in our own country, the place where we could be beſt enabled to extend our enquiries, and to aſcertain every circumſtance with the higheſt degree of preciſion, ſcarcely any ſuch materials as we now want are to be found. The hiſtory of Tom Thumb and the hiſtory of Iriſh Commerce, could be afforded by the bookſeller at nearly the ſame price. In every period of the hiſtory of our country, we are preſented with misfortunes enough to have afforded us knowledge. But one peculiarity of our ſituation has been, that we have ſuſtained the weight of miſery, without the benefit of that experience and caution which generally ariſe from diſtreſs. We have frequently received the ſtroke of poverty, but have not yet learned how to ward the blow. This is owing to our having been paſſive on the ſtage of Europe.

Ireland has been a ſufferer, but not an actor. Our misfortunes have not ariſen from the errors of our *own* activity. The mother-country, as ſhe has

has proudly termed herſelf, and our ſiſter kingdom as we now affect to ſtile her, took upon herſelf the active part as a kingdom. She never gave us any thing to do, but always ſomething to bear———to ſhare her misfortunes whenever ſhe was miſtaken; but to be a ſpectator only, not a ſharer of her advantages when ſhe proved ſucceſsful. Like the ſlaves in a Roman family, who were doomed to the general proſcription, when the enemies of their maſter's faction were triumphant, tho' they had received little but whips and hard labour in the days of his proſperity.

The principal advantages ariſing from activity and acting for ourſelves, either as nations or individuals, are derived from the habits of buſineſs in which particular men are trained, from the knowledge of facts which they acquire, and from the details which they can aſcertain in all the different parts of public or private intercourſe. When theſe are fully known, their true forms as they ſtand by themſelves, and their connecting parts as they ſtand related to each other, thoroughly inveſtigated, and familiarly imprinted on the mind, ſyſtems of intercourſe become readily formed, and the moſt ignorant can take advantage of the labours of the moſt ſkilful in ſociety. But ſuch advantages our ſituation unhappily precluded us from.

To debaſe us ſtill more, the errors of government were ſo palpable, the impreſſions of thoſe errors were ſo ſevere, that to *feel* was to *know*—— inference or deduction became uſeleſs, and being uſeleſs were not cultivated. Hence our men, ſuppoſed to be, and ſuppoſing themſelves to be men of buſineſs, have ſtudied modes of clamorous invective, rather than of ſerious inveſtigation; and particular

particular abuſe has ſupplied the place of general reaſoning. To ſuch a ſtate of ſubſtantial and intellectual poverty has the domination of England reduced us. When I ſpeak in ſuch terms of what has paſt, I do not mean to open again the ſources of diſcontent, or to blame thoſe tranſactions as having exhibited on the part of England any peculiar marks of political depravity. They aroſe from a *falſe ſyſtem of commerce*, from the ruinous ſpirit of MONOPOLY.

If then we have ſuffered ſo long and ſo ſeverely by this ſpirit of our ſiſter kingdom, ſhall we as the firſt act of our own free-will, adopt and enforce the ſame ſyſtem ourſelves? Shall we prove to England that we are Engliſhmen in every thing but their power, their induſtry, and their wealth?

You will perhaps reply to what I have ſaid, of the little information which can be obtained in the tranſactions of our country, or from the knowledge of our countrymen, that although the tranſactions of our country are as barren of materials as I have aſſerted them to be, yet, that our men of buſineſs can hardly warrant the obſervation which has been made on them. You will perhaps urge againſt me the examples of our orators and our patriots. Believe me when I tell you, that you muſt not look for examples of uſeful knowledge, or of true virtue among them. We have had men, whoſe formation has rendered it doubtful whether nature was a prodigal or a miſer ———ſo laviſh has ſhe been to them in the powers of the underſtanding, and ſo niggardly in the virtues of the heart. We have ſeen ſuch men devote their youth, the graceful and I believe the honeſt part of life, to the indulgence of the moſt ſhameful and pernicious appetites. When the body

body has ſunk under this torrent of animal gratification, the atrocious vigour of their genius has exerted itſelf, without diſtraction or interruption. An unmixed ſeverity of ſtudy has ſucceeded to an unreſtrained licentiouſneſs of enjoyment. Gloomy and diſtruſtful even in the very lap of pleaſure, it could not be expected that they ſhould have warmed into chearfulneſs, or relaxed into ſociability by the intenſeneſs of application. From this retirement they have come forth adorned but not amiable, wiſe but not uſeful. The application of our acquiſitions determines the motive of acquiring. Their induſtry has been pointed only to diſplay the miſeries of their country, but never to explain or enforce the methods of removing them. They have bent the powers of their imagination to the miſerable employment of inventing combinations of reproachful and abuſive terms againſt their antagoniſts, until our language has ſunk under their exertions. They ſeem to have ranged the paths of ſcience, and collected its materials together for no other purpoſe than to gild the bitterneſs of perſonal invective, with theſe ſplendid productions of their labours. Clamorous tribunes of the people, when the people were without hope, raiſing a futile oppoſition and pointing their exertions to little objects, becauſe thoſe objects were the favourites of government; but ſhrinking into and continuing the trickling adulators of a paltry court, when a lucky juncture of circumſtances opened a way to the courſe of the ſolid proſperity of their countrymen. After this when they have ſickened at the applauſes which followed ſome daring attempts in favour of liberty, we have ſeen them reſign the profits of venality, to the hopes of regaining their loſt character: and we have ſeen that contented cuckold—the people, with open arms

arms again receive them, tho' reeking from the very bed of proſtitution.*

THIS is the general deſcription of modern patriotiſm, and modern patriotiſm is to our political, what a modern diſeaſe is to our animal conſtitution. They are equally the children of licentiouſneſs: they equally faſten upon the ſources of exiſtence in their unhappy ſubjects: equally manifeſt their vigour by their venom; and nothing but the application of a metallic poiſon can ſtop the progreſs of either. Gold is to the political what mercury is to the animal infection. The miniſter and the phyſician who apply them, are equally juſtified by dreadful neceſſity. They do, it is true, ſtop the killing progreſs of the diſtemper; but the ſtrength of the patients waſte, and their beauties fade, under the malignant qualities of thoſe medicines which can only prolong exiſtence. From a connection with ſuch men you cannot hope for advantage. It would be dangerous to follow, and they will not ſuffer you to lead them.

HAVING given you theſe general cautions leſt you ſhould be miſled by the noiſe of party, or the glitter of individuals, or leſt you ſhould waſte your time in ſeeking for information where it is not to be found, I ſhall now proceed to lay before you ſome matters which I know you are candid and honeſt enough to wiſh for. To this end I ſhall require from you a little more ſobriety of attention than I believe you have found it neceſſary yet to beſtow.

THE

* Yet the people of Ireland have been told, that "the "affections of a politician are always matter of ſpecula- "tion. His *ſudden reverſes* of affection are ſtill more "ſuſpicious."

Sindercombe's letter in Lord Townſhend's time.

The demand which I apprehend will be made from the wiſdom of parliament, by ſome of thoſe gentlemen whoſe opinions coincide with the preſent diſpoſitions of the people is, that certain duties ſhall be laid on the importation from Great Britain, of all goods of the various branches of the woollen and cotton manufactures, ſo as to prevent in the home market a poſſibility of competition between theſe foreign fabrics and articles of the like nature, the produce of our own labour. Theſe duties ſo intended to be demanded, are now called by the popular name of *protecting duties*. The policy of this ſyſtem of protecting duties, I underſtand to be by preſerving the home market without any competition, to give to our own manufactures ſuch an extenſion of demand, and ſuch a certainty of profit as may enable us, by increaſing the ſkill of our manufacturers, and our capital employed in thoſe particular branches of buſineſs, to vie hereafter in foreign markets with foreign artiſts.

This I apprehend to be a plain and full ſtate of the queſtion———of the means, and of the end propoſed to be attained by thoſe means. From this ſtate I apprehend it appears, that they who inſiſt upon the meaſure of protecting duties, as an inſtrument neceſſary to the commercial proſperity of this country, muſt admit that we are underſold by foreign manufacturers in our own markets. It is not material to the preſent buſineſs from what circumſtances this cheapneſs of the articles ariſes, if the fact be ſo. I ſcarcely think it neceſſary to anſwer the idle reproach thrown out againſt the people of this country, of a partial fondneſs for the productions of other countries, when they can get their own as good and as cheap.

Whoever

Whoever ſhall go into a fair in the country, or into the Houſe of Commons in Dublin, which is, or *we all know* ought to be, the Repreſentative of all the *fairs* in the country, will quickly perceive that foppery is not the predominant vice of the good people of Ireland. I am ready to grant that a few perhaps may be found in both places, who are what their neighbours call Beaux ——— but thoſe are very few; and their caſt of character is generally drawn into ſome unpleaſant notice, both in the honourable Houſe and in the fair, by the ſalutary wit of a nick-name. It muſt be admitted then, that the cauſe of this demand upon our legiſlature is, *that we are underſold at home.*

Before any legiſlature ſhould carry a propoſition of this nature into a law: into a law likely to operate ſo extenſively as this neceſſarily muſt do, they ſhould be fully ſatisfied of the truth of this aſſertion———that it will be a law likely to operate to the good of the *whole* community. If it ſhould operate immediately to the good of any one particular part, without at the ſame time operating to the injury of any other particular part, I apprehend it would be a law operating ultimately to the good of the whole: inaſmuch as the wealth of one part muſt neceſſarily diffuſe itſelf in a degree through the remainder. But if it ſhould be a law operating to the profit of any one part of the community, at an expence equivalent to that profit thrown upon any other parts of the community, it could not be a law operating to the good of the whole. If the profit of the one part were preciſely equal to the loſs ſuſtained by the other part, and ſo there were no actual loſs ſuſtained, yet it would be a law not only not operating to the good of the whole, but a law actually operating to the injury of the whole. For it would turn the tide of

of induſtry out of its natural and fixed channel, into an artificial, and conſequently an uncertain one.

And again, admitting the profits to be preciſely equal to the loſs, yet ſtill if the profit were given entirely to one part of the community, and if the loſs were divided among many parts of it, it would be a dangerous, and conſequently an injurious law. For the profit which was given to one part, being heaped in one ſpot, the increaſe would be eaſily diſcerned: but the loſs, although equal to the profit, yet being divided into many parts, the diminution could not be perceived; and thus the community would be cheated into a belief of an increaſe of wealth, which it had actually never acquired——a dangerous and injurious belief!

I have have ſtated the matter in theſe various points of view, becauſe I am fully perſuaded that to aſcertain whether the meaſure of protecting duties, will operate ultimately to the good of the whole community, it will be neceſſary to examine it in every one of them. You may call me formal if you pleaſe, for the manner in which I have done this——but if by becoming more formal I ſhall become more clear, if I can convince your underſtanding, by affording you an opportunity to laugh a little at me, I ſhall give you your jeſt, and proceed with my argument.

The general ſyſtem of England in her commerce, has been this ſyſtem of reſtraint and protection, with ſome occaſional deviations however from her general rule. The general ſyſtem of Holland, on the contrary, has been a ſyſtemof commerce free and unprotected, with ſome occaſional deviations into the ſyſtem of England——

into

into reſtraint and protection. Both countries have in general purſued ſyſtems directly oppoſite, but they have occaſionally adopted the maxims of each other. Both countries working under theſe oppoſite plans of commercial intercourſe, have acquired a degree of wealth and power unknown to the other ſtates of Europe. I have made theſe obſervations upon the different conduct of the two countries, not that I intend to apply them immediately, but that you may carry them in your recollection until the application will be too obvious to eſcape you.

HAVING endeavoured to prepare your mind by the foregoing obſervations for this examination, I ſhall trouble you to follow me while I examine a queſtion which comes home to the "buſineſs and boſom" of every Iriſhman—whether the meaſure of protecting duties, as I have before ſtated it, is a meaſure which it would be prudent in the legiſlature of Ireland to adopt: either circumſtanced as Ireland is at preſent, or in any other circumſtances in which we can conceive her to exiſt?

IRELAND muſt adopt it then, either as a principle univerſally uſeful, or as one which would be uſeful to her from her particular circumſtances.

WE ſhall preſently ſee how far it can be conſidered as a principle univerſally uſeful, by ſuppoſing it carried univerſally into execution.

THE miſts of prejudice, and the clouds of error which relaxed the induſtry and defaced the morals of Europe, for ſo many centuries after the downfal of the Roman empire, have been for above 200 years laſt paſt gradually evaporating and diſperſing. The different nations of Europe are now beginning

beginning clearly to perceive the advantages reſulting from general commerce, of enabling each other to participate of the productions of different ſoils and climates, and of the different exertions of human induſtry and invention. With the eagerneſs natural to human nature upon the appearance of a new object of hope, they are now all running the race of commerce. If the Iriſh ſhould adopt this meaſure as a general principle, it is not probable that the ſalutary regimen will remain long a ſecret. The wiſdom of our Volunteers has already appeared in the Amſterdam gazette——and that is a paper, as George Faulkner ſaid of the Dublin Journal, read in the coffee houſes of Conſtantinople and Dunſtable. The wiſdom of Ireland muſt ſtamp authority on it——let us ſuppoſe it then univerſally adopted. To a benevolent mind, no proſpect can be more delightful, than the contemplation of the univerſal adoption of a principle which, wherever it is received, muſt give new hands to induſtry, and new wings to invention. Let us indulge ourſelves in the pleaſing hope of ſeeing England prohibit our linen and our beef, the wines and fruit of Portugal, Spain or France: Portugal, or Spain, prohibit the hardware and the woollens of England, the linen and the beef of Ireland; and America prohibit every thing.

In ſhort let us ſuppoſe, in imitation of the wiſdom of Ireland, a complete and univerſal prevention to take place in every country, of the importation of every article which could in any way be fabricated at home, or for which any ſuccedaneum could be diſcovered. Alas! what is become of our benevolence now? Shall ſhe never drink punch again? Every thing being prevented from being imported every

every where, any thing cannot be exported any where. After ſuch a concluſion, it would be ridiculous to dwell upon this part of the ſubject any longer. But I ſhall go farther. I ſhall ſuppoſe for a little time, that the eagerneſs of imitation, or the ſweets of retaliation and revenge, would not in this caſe operate as they operate in moſt caſes on mankind, and that no ſuch univerſal adoption of this commercial principle, as I have mentioned, ſhould take place. On the contrary, I will ſuppoſe the reſt of Europe, particularly England, ſo blind or ſo tender-hearted as to permit Ireland to attempt to enrich herſelf at their expence. Yet I ſhall not ſcruple to aſſert, that however freely ſhe might be permitted to indulge herſelf in her ſchemes of aggrandiſement, without danger of retaliation from England or any other country, ſhe could not enrich herſelf by any ſuch meaſure.

To ſave the inconvenience of contradiction, and perverſion, it is often neceſſary to ſtate that which is already known and admitted. That we may aſcertain what the means are by which a nation may moſt probably be enriched, it will be neceſſary for us to aſk in what the wealth of a nation conſiſts? For the ſake of truth, we ſhould be accurate even to enumeration in this particular. It is eaſy for falſe, to wear the appearance of true reaſoning, when it travels through general and undefined terms, and gives us a compariſon where an inſtance ſhould be produced.

The wealth of a nation then conſiſts in that ſtock of materials, whatever thoſe materials may be, which are neceſſary or pleaſing to the exiſtence of man—which conſtitute his neceſſaries or his comforts. This ſtock of materials may be ſaid to conſiſt particularly of food, cloaths, houſes, houſhold furniture,

furniture, buildings for the aſſiſtance of labour or the preſervation of goods, money, improvements of land, of all the different articles, in whatever ſtage of preparation they may be of which theſe are compounded ——— to theſe muſt be added, as a part of the ſtock, the acquired and uſeful ſkill of all the inhabitants. I pretend not to be perfectly accurate in this enumeration. Something in the hurry in which I am obliged to call upon my memory, may have eſcaped me. It will be ſufficient for me, if I ſhall be able to point your attention to the proper objects.

Of the whole quantity of theſe materials which are called ſtock, ſome part of it is neceſſarily appropriated to the immediate conſumption of the people, and conſequently cannot increaſe. The other part, after having laid by all that is neceſſary for immediate conſumption, is kept as a ſubject of the induſtry of the people to work upon, and by working upon to increaſe, and is called the capital. What is true of a nation in this particular, is true of every individual in it. Every man will find this diviſion take place in his property. Although I have enumerated the ſkill of the inhabitants among the different articles of ſtock, it is palpable that it is of a different nature from the reſt. It is the vital principle of the whole capital. It is a collection of ſprings, by which all the various parts of the capital are moved. The five Dutchmen who were caſt away on the coaſt of Greenland, had, I ſuppoſe, as much induſtry and ſkill as any of their countrymen who reſided in Holland; but for want of materials, that is, capital to work upon, they were neceſſitated to ſpend the half of their days in ſleep, and the whole of them in poverty.

Hence

HENCE it follows, that any attempt to increaſe the induſtry of the ſociety, without, at the ſame time, increaſing the quantity of materials upon which that induſtry is to work, muſt fail of ſucceſs. That, and that only, which adds to the wealth of a nation, is the difference between thoſe articles which are added to the capital of the ſociety, by the induſtry of its members, and thoſe which are taken from it within the ſame ſpace of time for their conſumption. Now what regulation of commerce, prohibiting the importation of any given commodity, can increaſe that difference. You reply, that by invigorating the induſtry of ſociety, you will thereby increaſe the quantity of materials for it to work upon. No. The induſtry of every ſociety is proportioned to a certain increaſe of its materials, and by that certain increaſe of its materials, a foundation is laid for a new acceſſion of induſtry. But if you would ſuddenly increaſe the induſtry of any ſociety, beyond what the former increaſe of its materials has laid a foundation for, you muſt alſo ſuddenly increaſe the quantity of materials beyond the former ſtock.

THE increaſe of materials muſt, by the inevitable relation of things, *precede* the increaſe of induſtry. The firſt ſtroke of the induſtry of man was applied to materials, *previouſly* provided by nature. Had theſe materials not been *previouſly* provided, his induſtry never could have had a *commencement*. Having, I think, clearly proved, that an increaſe of materials muſt *precede* an increaſe of induſtry, it remains to be ſhewn whether a protecting duty can prepare that increaſe of the ſtock of materials. It cannot. A protecting duty when enacted, will not add an additional number of ploughſhares, to aſſiſt the hand of man in tilling the earth. It will not dive into the earth to procure

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the iron to make that ploughſhare. It will not procure corn to be ſown, nor leather to be tanned, nor wool to be ſpun. Is it expected that the magic of a protecting duty, will operate as powerfully as the agency of the Grecian deities, and cauſe a horſe and an olive tree to ſpring at once from the earth, for the uſe of its favourite city ?

As it is obvious then, that a protecting duty cannot, of itſelf, increaſe the quantity of materials in any country ; and, as it is equally obvious, that induſtry cannot be maintained without a capital of materials to work upon, it follows inevitably, that an inſtrument which cannot *previouſly* increaſe the quantity of materials or capital, can never increaſe the induſtry of any country.

But, after this reaſoning, however convincing it may appear in theory, ſome account muſt be given to you of that appearance in other countries, which, as it has always followed the enacting of protecting duties, has therefore been always conſidered as an effect of it. I mean the increaſe of that particular manufacture, in favour of which protecting duties have been enacted.

Experience here ſeems to be directly againſt the reaſoning of which I have made uſe. I admit, that wherever a protecting duty has been enacted, an increaſe of the particular manufacture in favour of which it was enacted has followed. I admit, that this effect is apparently againſt the reaſoning which I have laid before you : but I ſay, that it is only ſo apparently. For although I admit, that wherever a protecting duty has been enacted, an increaſe of the *particular manufacture* has followed; yet, I deny that thereby the wealth of the *whole community* has been increaſed. This will be beſt explained

explained by tracing the effects of a protecting duty. Let me ſuppoſe then a protecting duty had actually taken place in favour of our woollen manufactures. The effect of this would be an immediate activity in that branch of buſineſs. But by what means does the protecting duty produce this effect? By obliging every conſumer in the community to pay a price for goods, which otherwiſe he would not do. Remember, that the reaſon for a protecting duty is, that the ſame ſort of goods can be had elſewhere, better or cheaper. What then is the conſumer compelled to? To pay a greater price for the ſame goods, or the ſame price for worſe goods than he could otherwiſe have obtained.

Now what is the price that the conſumer pays? Money you will ſay. No. Money is the inſtrument by which he facilitates the exchange; but the price which he actually pays, is ſo much as he gave of his labour and ſkill, working upon his capital to acquire that money. What is the actual effect then of a protecting duty upon the whole community? It compels every conſumer to give ſo much more of his time, labour, and ſkill, working upon his capital, for the commodity of which he ſtands in need, than he otherwiſe ſhould have done.

The revenue of every country is produced by the labour of the inhabitants, operating upon its capital. The addition to the wealth of any country, is made by the difference between its conſumption and its revenue. If then the inhabitants ſhall be compelled to give ſo much *more* of their revenue, that is, their labour, working upon their capital, for any part of their conſumption, than they otherwiſe ſhould have done, it is obvious

 that

that they produce ſo much leſs by their labour, and by conſequence, the difference between the amount of the conſumption, and revenue of the country is leſſened, not increaſed.

The policy of every legiſlature ſhould be, to enable its people to obtain the greateſt poſſible quantity of every kind of conſumable commodity, by the ſmalleſt poſſible exertion of labour; for the leſs labour it is neceſſary to exert in the acquiſition of any particular commodity, the more may be ſpared for the acquiſition of others. Hence the advantages of all ſorts of machines, in the abridgment of all ſorts of labour. Here then is a policy directly oppoſite to that general rule. It obliges every conſumer of woollen cloth, to give a greater exertion to his labour, for the acquiſition of that which could have been obtained for a leſs. It operates upon every conſumer, as if he were tranſported to a climate leſs friendly, and a ſoil leſs fertile than that in which he had lived. He is obliged to exert himſelf more to live as well as he had before done. It operates as a tax upon every conſumer in the country, the amount of which is put into the pockets of a few of the manufacturers. Now, as the number of conſumers of any one article muſt infinitely exceed that of the manufacturers, how can any legiſlature juſtify the taxation of a larger body of its ſubjects in favour of a ſmaller. But in a trading country moſt of the conſumers of any particular commodity are themſelves manufacturers. In proportion as they are taxed for any article of conſumption, they will raiſe the price of every article of their own manufacture upon other conſumers. Hence the riſe of every article of manufacture, in conſequence of the riſe of one——hence the unfitneſs, from the univerſal dearneſs of commodities, to ſupply foreign markets

——hence

——hence the very manufacturers, in whoſe favour a protecting duty ſhould be enacted, would be themſelves taxed to pay the price of their own avarice.

But it will be anſwered to this argument, that it proves too much. That it proves that no country could have ſucceeded, where ſuch a miſerable policy had been adopted. That the inſtance of England where this policy was adopted, proves the fallacy of the argument. But I reply, that the inſtance of England does not prove the fallacy of the argument. On the contrary, it illuſtrates and enforces its truth. It is the want of attention to the *particulars* of the progreſs of England that deceives. England began very early to addict herſelf to commerce. In this purſuit ſhe had the advantage of moſt of her preſent competitors, by having begun before them. England began very early to diſplay the marks of her blundering avarice, her prohibitions both of export and import. Yet with much induſtry, frugality, and a very arrogant ſpirit of monopoly, her commercial ſucceſs, until about the commencement of the preſent century, was but ſmall.

If we compare the commercial advancement of England with that of Holland, we ſhall find that ſhe was infinitely outdone by Holland before this laſt century; yet England ſet out with an infinitely greater extent of territory, and exceeded Holland in the numbers of her people, in the fertility of her ſoil, and the quantity of her capital. Add to the diſadvantages of Holland, that ſhe began her courſe under the burthen of a war carried on in her own country, againſt a powerful and implacable maſter, who endeavoured with his whole force to haraſs and oppreſs her. She eſcaped from

from this; but ſhe eſcaped with an unſettled government, a ſmall capital, and that capital in debt. Holland however had proceeded on a better plan than England had, and ſhe ſucceeded accordingly. The firſt conſiderable advance which England made in her commerce, did not proceed from any advantages which ſhe produced in her own market.

The wars with the Dutch in the time of the Commonwealth, and in the reign of Charles the Second, diſturbed their commerce ſo much, that England was enabled to ſeize a part of that body which ſhe had ſeparated and ſcattered. Her natural ſtrength enabled her to cope with the acquired power of her wiſer adverſary. After theſe wars the firſt conſiderable addition to the commerce of England was obſerved; but this was the plunder of a robber, not the profit of a merchant. From this period, that is from the end of the war, which was concluded by the peace of Nimeguen, in 1678, to the year 1704, the increaſe of the Engliſh commerce was not of any extraordinary magnitude. Scarcely any thing but what will be added by every frugal nation to its capital, by the difference between the produce of its induſtry and its conſumption. Not ſo much as would have been added to it, had every one of her ports been as open as St. Euſtatia was at the time of its late capture. I take the year 1704 particularly, becauſe I am enabled from the papers which were laid upon the table in the Engliſh Houſe of Commons, in the year 1775, to ſtate the amount of the trade of England in 1704. In the year 1704, the whole export of England to all the world, amounted to 6,509,000l. Immediately prior to the year 1775, the whole export trade to all the world, ſtood at about 16,000,000l.

From

FROM the firſt peopling of England down to the year 1704, the accumulated induſtry of England, produced little more than 6,000,000l. But in little better than half a century nearly 10,000,000l. were added to this. To what was this alteration owing? To the colony trade. Of this laſt ſum of nearly 10,000,000l. the colony export amounted to above 6,000,000l.——and was ſuppoſed to have been a cauſe of the increaſe of the other parts of the export. The colony trade alone, in the latter period, was equal to the entire trade in the former.

AFTER this ſhort ſtate of the progreſs of England, let me call your attention for a moment to the inference which may be drawn from it. I ſay then, that from comparing the two different ſtages into which I have divided the progreſs of England, it appears, that during the firſt period ſhe had been ſtruggling with a falſe policy, of which ſhe felt the effects, but was ignorant of the cauſe. This is evident, by her having been outdone by Holland, in the ſame attempt; but who, either by ſuperior wiſdom or better fortune, had taken another courſe. During this time however, accident and her own ambition, had led England into a ſyſtem of coloniſing. Under a variety of fortunes theſe colonies had increaſed. In theſe colonies then ſhe found a remedy for that diſeaſe which her own intemperance had brought upon her.

As the dearneſs of her manufactures, occaſioned by the ſhackles which had been thrown upon her trade, had excluded her from markets which ſhe would have been obliged *to court*, ſhe was fortunate in having found thoſe where ſhe could *dictate*. She owed her profit to her power of dictating to ſo large an empire as ſhe held in ſubjection. She barricaded her intercourſe with the colonies by every inſtrument

ment which enormous expence could enable her to collect—ſhe precluded all other nations from competition, for ſhe knew it would have been fatal.

Again, the revenue acquired by the colony exports, was not as the revenue acquired by the exports to independent kingdoms would have been, clear gain. England expended 200,000,000l. in the ſupport and preſervation of this complicated ſyſtem of commerce. She did ſo: and while ſurrounding nations ſat, as in a theatre, the ſilent ſpectators of this diſplay of her *power*, the ſpring of *liberty* is touched, the lights of her glory ſink, and the ſplendid machinery on which ſo many millions had been laviſhed, vaniſhes for ever!

But I will not take advantage in argument, of the miſerable termination which has been put to the commercial grandeur of England; I will ſuppoſe that grandeur to ſubſiſt. What follows from the example? That to ſupport a ſyſtem of *prohibition*, a ſyſtem of *monopoly* is neceſſary. That to ſupport theſe ſyſtems ſo contrary to the intereſts of mankind, a nation muſt fight, ſhe muſt negotiate, ſhe muſt conquer or colonize. Therefore a ſyſtem of prohibition *alone* is not to be ſupported. But can Ireland fight, negociate, conquer or colonize? Has ſhe 200,000,000l. to expend in theſe purſuits, or if ſhe had, would ſhe ſo expend it? But I will quit *this* view of England, from which it clearly appears, that her conduct affords no example againſt the truth of that commercial theory, which I have endeavoured to eſtabliſh. I will take a view of England ſtronger againſt my own argument. Separate the two periods into which the trade of England has been divided, and take the latter. From the year 1704, England was all prohibition and monopoly

nopoly; ſhe was at the ſame time all activity, all power, and all wealth. Were not the latter then the effects of the former? I ſhall admit they were; but I will ſtill ſay, that even this view of England affords no example againſt the general theory.

If we include the dominions of England, in Europe, in the Eaſt, and in the Weſt, we ſhall find that her empire, like that of ancient Rome, "compre-"hended the faireſt part of the earth, and the moſt "civilized portion of mankind*." She exceeded antient Rome in extent of territory, in infinite variety of ſoil and climate, and in the dexterity and ingenuity of her ſubjects. For an empire like this, who included *within herſelf*, every production that could relieve the neceſſities, or gratify the luxuries of mankind, to prohibit was hardly to *exclude*. She could ſupply herſelf, within herſelf, with every thing. This example only proves, that in proportion as empire extends over fertile ſoils, and various climates, and in proportion as it can command the range of human ingenuity, its wants of external commerce are leſſened. The effects of a prohibitory ſyſtem therefore, become only leſs pernicious as this proportion increaſes. The empire of China may venture to deſpiſe and to thwart foreign commerce; but theſe examples, though exceptions, juſtify the general theory—they ſhew the variety of circumſtances which are required by any ſtate to juſtify a deviation from it. But it will be ſaid, that England owed her extent of dominion to the very ſyſtem which I oppoſe It is not ſo. She fought for dominion, and the nation which fights, cannot be ſaid to owe her greatneſs to any ſyſtem. Her ſucceſſes will be determined by accidents, the riſe of which cannot be foreſeen or commanded.—

Had

* Gibbon.

Had Harry the Fourth of France ſucceeded quietly to his crown; had France been able to purſue his politics after his death; or in a later period, had not the projects of Louis the Fourteenth directed in ſome degree the French activity from commercial purſuits, the flight of England muſt have been lowered. The misfortunes which the character of Philip the Second of Spain entailed upon that country, contributed not a little to elevate the fortune of England. Theſe were circumſtances which no penetration could foreſee, and which if foreſeen, no ſyſtem could have controlled.

The example of France, who purſued the ſame ſyſtem as England, will, no doubt, be urged againſt me—but it will be urged againſt me in vain.

Sully, the wiſeſt politician, and the honeſteſt miniſter that ever ſerved a grateful maſter, as ſoon as the ſettlement of the government enabled him, encouraged the agriculture of France: not by monoplies or prohibitions, but by lightening as much as poſſible the burthen of taxation on the huſbandman, and by encouraging him to expect a ſteady poſſeſſion of his profits and of his capital. Under this wiſe ſyſtem, the nation ſpeedily recovered from the injuries of a civil war. Under it ſhe would have flouriſhed. But Colbert, who came ſome time after him, leſs ſagacious and more impatient, threw a greedy eye upon the gaudineſs of manufacture. He prohibited from abroad, and he encouraged at home. What was the conſequence? Manufactures flouriſhed, but agriculture decayed.

The French ever ſince the time of Colbert, tho' the moſt induſtrious people in Europe, and poſſeſſing the moſt fertile territory, have been more frequently ſubject to famine than any other nation. The ſhuttle flew, and the people ſtarved! This is the

the conſequence of attempting to increaſe the induſtry of a people, without having previouſly increaſed their capital. This is preciſely taking from one body of ſubjects a quantity of induſtry and capital, and giving it to another—*turning the tide of induſtry out of its natural and fixed channel, into an artificial, and conſequently an uncertain one.* France has been for ſome years endeavouring to correct the miſtakes of Colbert.

But if what I have ſtated of France were not true, her example would not juſtify Ireland. France may be compared to one of thoſe great empires which have been already mentioned. Her colonies were conſiderable. She commanded above 16,000,000 of people at home; ſhe poſſeſſed above 150,000 ſquare miles of the moſt fertile territory, ſituated in the moſt beneficent climate in Europe. Can Ireland, narrowed in her territory, leſs fertile in her ſoil, with ſomething under 3,000,000 of people, and under the influence of a more ſullen climate, preſume to deviate into the policy of France? What then remains for her? To reject a ſyſtem contradicted by theory, and unwarranted by example.

I may now, I think, venture to aſſert, that the country which is enabled to exchange the ſmalleſt proportion of any commodity which it has, and which it does not want, for the greateſt proportion of any commodity which it has not, and which it does want, is the moſt likely to become rich. It is evident that this cannot be attained by any method but by an open market. But as a market entirely open cannot be expected in any country which has the expences of its government to defray, a market as near to an open one as thoſe expences will admit, is moſt to be deſired. The advantage

of

of an open market has been as evident in practice as I hope it now appears in theory. From the taking of Tyre by Alexander, to the taking of St. Euſtatia by Admiral Rodney,* there has not been a ſingle inſtance of any place declaring, and preſerving itſelf a free port, which has not riſen into a degree of wealth, infinitely beyond any thing which has been acquired by other ſyſtems of policy.

It has been, I think, clearly ſhewn, that the principle of ſecuring the home market againſt a foreign intercourſe, by protecting duties, would be generally injurious; but I will forego the advantage of my own argument. I will for a moment ſuppoſe the clamours of our countrymen to be founded in ſound policy, and I will admit that a protecting duty, inſtead of having been proved to be an injurious ſyſtem of policy, had appeared to have been a ſalutary one. However ſound a general principle of policy may appear, it will ſometimes happen, that a country may find ſuch a combination of circumſtances to ariſe from her connections and ſituation, as to warrant a deviation from it.

Admitting then, that the meaſure of protecting duties, inſtead of being a meaſure injurious to commerce, was an encouragement and an aſſiſtance to it; I will venture to aſſert, that there is now ſuch a combination of circumſtances in the connections and ſituation of Ireland, as ſhould induce her to deviate from it. It is natural to man to dwell with peculiar complacency upon the phantoms of his own imagination—he conſiders them as real objects

* I do not intend to ſuggeſt any likeneſs between the two heroes by placing them together. In three circumſtances indeed they afford ſome likeneſs—rapacity, inſolence, and good fortune.

truly

truly repreſented, nor once perceives the medium through which they are diſtorted. What is true of individuals, will be generally true of governments and of nations—the ſame paſſions excite, the ſame fancies miſlead. To detect this propenſity in individuals and in ſtates, may be uſeful on the preſent occaſion. It may teach them both to avoid hazarding experiments, where want of ſucceſs and total ruin ſtand for each other.

IRELAND is at this inſtant in poſſeſſion of a branch of trade, in which ſhe ſtands confeſſedly ſuperior to any nation in the world : it has long enriched the whole, and now actually employs a moiety of her people *. Of this manufacture, the whole of what has hitherto been exported, has been exported to Great Britain ; and nine tenths of what has been ſent there, has been conſumed there. The actual ſubſiſtence then of one half, and the eaſe and wealth of the whole of the people of this kingdom depend not merely upon the general trade of Great Britain, but upon actual conſumption within that kingdom.

WE are now clamouring for duties, the avowed purpoſe of which is to prevent the introduction into this kingdom of the ſtaple commodity of that country, whoſe internal conſumption is the ſole ſource of our induſtry and our wealth. Forbearance and generoſity have ſeldom been national characteriſtics any where ; but if they were, we could have little hope of their prevalence in Great Britain. The counſels of Great Britain have been more influenced by pride and ſelfiſhneſs, than thoſe

* Beſide the whole province of Ulſter—the following counties have each of them a ſhare of this trade more or leſs, viz. Louth, King's County, Queen's County, Drogheda, Dublin, Sligo, Mayo, Roſcommon, Cork and Kildare.

perhaps

perhaps of any other nation. The general character of nations, and the particular character of Great Britain, therefore, warrant the opinion, that ſhe will be as ready to retaliate the injury, as we are to inflict it.

PERMIT me then, to ſtate at once our gain and loſs upon this occaſion, and let ſelf-intereſt draw the concluſion. We gain a certainty of ſupplying ourſelves at home with particular articles of conſumption, which we are now furniſhed with from a foreign market. This is the only *certain* advantage (and were I diſpoſed to argue all that could be argued, it might perhaps be proved, that even this is problematical*) which can attend this meaſure. We alſo open to ourſelves a probability, or rather a poſſibility of improving thoſe manufactures in whoſe favour the duties are intended, ſo far as to be able to vie with other nations in foreign markets: ſo that we ſee the whole extent of benefit, which can, even by the moſt fortunate iſſue, accrue from the adoption of this meaſure, conſiſts in advancing the woollen and cotton manufactories, to the ſame degree of national advantage which ariſes from the linen at preſent. Thus ſtands our account of gain. The loſs which will attend it, conſiſts in a certain deſtruction of our linen manufacture—a manufacture already matured, neceſſary to all the purpoſes of home conſumption and

* When the encouragement given to ſmuggling by every high duty, comes to be conſidered, it will appear that this aſſertion is well founded—that a high duty cannot always protect. This will be particularly true, with regard to Great Britain and Ireland; from the neighbourhood of their coaſts, and from the appointment of the officers of revenue in Ireland, being in the hands of Engliſhmen. From this laſt circumſtance it is not probable, that a law, which is in fact a bribe to our governors to encourage ſmuggling, will be carried very rigorouſly into execution.

foreign

foreign ſupply, which affords an immenſe revenue to the kingdom, into which the genius of the people hath been turned, from the firſt dawn of induſtry among them; and for what? For the chance of an event which ſucceeding to our utmoſt wiſhes, can at laſt only place us in the ſame degree of conſequence, as a trading nation, that we at preſent enjoy.

But you will ſay, that I have been all this time arguing on a falſe ſuppoſition. That I have ſuppoſed England to purſue a conduct which ſhe will not. Let us examine this matter. You deny that England will prohibit the importation of our linens; you ſay that it is not conſiſtent with the ſelfiſh character of the Engliſh, to ſubject themſelves to an inconvenience merely to revenge a loſs. The validity of the charge then againſt me, depends upon England's ſuffering an inconvenience from the prohibition of Iriſh linen. If I ſhew to you that England will gain conſiderably by the prohibition of our linens, you are no longer protected by their ſelfiſh character.

Look then at the Engliſh ſtatutes relating to the importation of linens, from the 10 Ann. c. 19. downwards; you will ſee that the conſumption of foreign linen in England is ſubjected to a weighty duty. How does that duty operate? As a premium upon the conſumption of Iriſh linen. Take away the duty, what will be the effect? That the manufacturers of Ireland in the Britiſh markets could be underſold by the Germans, &c. from 15 to 20 per cent. The very circumſtance of relieving foreign linens from the duty which they are liable to pay at preſent, would operate as a prohibition upon the importation of ours. I ſay as a prohibition, for where there could be no demand, there

there would be no importation: And what individual in England would pay 20 per cent. more for a piece of linen, merely becauſe it was made in Ireland, than he could get a piece of linen of any other country for? The induſtry of England is by theſe laws taxed to ſupport the induſtry of Ireland. The difference of price is the ſame thing as the difference of labour, in procuring any article; and if a tax compels you to pay a higher price for any article than you could have procured it for if that tax had not exiſted, that tax diſables you from being able to produce ſo much by your labour as you could have done without it. Add to this, that there is another tax upon the induſtry of England to ſupport the induſtry of Ireland. I mean the bounties which are paid from one halfpenny to three halfpence, upon Iriſh linens exported from Great Britain; the amount of that bounty paid upon the exportation of Iriſh linen, muſt be produced by the labour of England.

But ſuppoſing that this advantage did not hold itſelf out as a temptation to England. Suppoſing that they could not eaſe themſelves of a conſiderable part of their burthens, by attacking the induſtry of Ireland in this unfortified part; let us examine whether there be not ſome other inducements to it.

It is much eaſier after any art has arrived to any tolerable degree of perfection, to raiſe it up to the higheſt degree of refinement of which it is capable, than to raiſe it from its firſt rudiments up to that tolerable ſtate. The firſt awkward attempts of induſtry got over, the way becomes leſs difficult as we aſcend. Hence arts which have been travelling for centuries towards a middle ſtate will gain the ſummit of perfection in the courſe of a few years. There

There is now, and has been for a conſiderable time paſt, a linen manufacture exiſting in Great Britain. It has gone beyond that middle ſtate, to attain which, is the difficult part of the progreſs. It has been computed, that this manufacture has employed not leſs than 800,000 perſons. The neceſſity which England, from her late misfortunes, now labours under, of ſeeking for every reſource of wealth within herſelf, would fully juſtify her policy in endeavouring to make her linen manufacture a *ſecond ſtaple* of England. It has already become a pleaſing object of national contemplation. In the laſt ſeſſion of parliament, it engaged the attention of the country gentlemen; and the eloquence of ſome of the ſenators of England was employed in perſuading parliament to adopt ſome method of encouraging IT, by *protecting duties*: And as among other good effects of our free trade, a cargo of our oratory is, we underſtand, intended to be exported, and offered for the ſupply of the Engliſh market; we may yet hear of Iriſh provincial ſounds being tuned to the meaſure of Engliſh protecting duties!

You perceive then, how the intereſt of England is doubly tempted to ruin us On the one hand, to relieve herſelf from the weighty tax of taking our linens at a price of 15 or 20 per cent. dearer than ſhe could ſupply herſelf elſewhere; or on the other, to aſſiſt the progreſs of a riſing and a favourite manufacture of her own. Refuſe the admiſſion of her manufactures into your ports, and you add the ſtimulations of revenge to the urgency of avarice. You can then have little to hope from the intereſt, and ſurely nothing to expect from the benevolence of England. That trade which has been hitherto the ſource of employment and of wealth, will be loſt to us for ever.

We caſt off that full grown offſpring which had long nouriſhed and ſupported us, and adopt a ſickly infant, whoſe arriving at maturity is at beſt doubtful. We give up a fair inheritance of ample revenue, for an uncertain reverſion, which can at laſt but equal what we at preſent enjoy; and for the chance of enabling generations yet unborn, to arrive at the *ſame* rank in the commercial ſyſtem which we now relinquiſh, reduce ourſelves to inſtant beggary! Did we ſacrifice preſent advantages to give an increaſe of wealth and dignity to future ages, the refinement of patriotiſm might applaud the deed: but here we have preſent poverty without future benefit—We cannot even expect the gratitude of poſterity, to reward us for our ſelf-denial. From this ſingle inſtance then, we may collect how big with deſtruction to this country that meaſure would prove, which is now preſſed upon us for our approbation. Were it neceſſary to extend our obſervation, it would be eaſy to ſhew, that this is not the only aſpect in which the adoption of this plan, would have a malignant influence upon the welfare of this kingdom—Not only that general jealouſy which would inſtantly ariſe among all nations, from a ſyſtem founded on a principle of monopoly, ſhould be avoided; but the connection of this country with England, is ſuch as would render the raiſing ſuch a ſentiment there, fraught with peculiar danger.——Where the intereſt of governors and governed are ſuppoſed to be at variance, there never can be peace; it will be at the beſt "*a ſtate of ſmother'd war:*" and though we may now, with a degree of pride due to our virtuous efforts, ſay, that we are not governed by England, we are yet governed by Engliſhmen.——They will ever think it neceſſary, to preſerve the intereſts of that kingdom from which they are ſent; and will certainly oppoſe the adoption of meaſures that

that will appear to them, to have no other object in view, than to diſtreſs the people of that country.

If we examine into the ſpirit which dictates this plan, we will find it to be the pride of equality; not an attention to profit—ſhould we however purſue, it will be an equality of wrong, not an equality of right; of injury, not of benefit; of folly, not of wiſdom. We grow rich by the exchange of commodities; and as we extend our markets, we increaſe the opportunities of acquiring. We have at preſent a market in ſome degree extenſive; but by the falſe policy of our neighbours, not ſo extenſive as we could wiſh. In order to remedy this inconvenience, we narrow that ſtile more, which we complain is already too ſmall: we complain of the ſelfiſh jealouſy of England, and at the ſame moment juſtify her by following her example. We ſee then, that in every point of view, in which this meaſure can be conſidered, as we ſtand connected with England, it is a meaſure full of impolicy and ruin: and that even allowing the general principle of a protecting duty to be a juſt one, there are many circumſtances in the preſent ſituation of Ireland, with reſpect to that country, which would not only warrant but demand a deviation.

But it is not only her relation to England, which ſhould induce this deviation.

The ſyſtem of commercial intercourſe now commencing between the old and the new world, ſeems likely to prove a ſource of wealth and power, of the extent of which any intercourſe which has been hitherto carried on by mankind, can give but an inadequate idea. Ireland is ſituate in a climate of ſo even a temperature, that its ports are equally acceſſible at all ſeaſons. This is a bleſſing to which

the northern part of the continent of Europe, and almoſt the whole northern part of the continent of America are entirely ſtrangers. Theſe two diſtinguiſhed portions of the globe, are now peopled by the moſt active part of the human race. Beſides its being ſituated in a climate ſo advantageous to commerce, the ſhipping of both continents muſt take their departure from, or make the land of Ireland in their voyages. Ireland is the uniting ſpot, where the inhabitants of both hemiſpheres will hail each other.

The perſons moſt ſkilled in the American trade admit, that they can make five voyages between any of the weſtern ports of Ireland and America, in the ſame ſpace of time that they can make three to any of the trading ports of England. Ireland has the advantage of ſituation therefore over the neareſt parts of Europe, as five to three: her climate and her poſition then, are both pointing the way her to glory. What is that way which they are pointing at? To make herſelf a general market for the commodities of two worlds.

By a general market, I mean a place provided with that general aſſortment of goods, that ſhips unlading the commodities of any one country, may find that variety of articles by which they can, in one ſpot, procure a completely aſſorted cargo, to carry back whence they came.

In a commercial intercourſe between two countries of great extent, where one abounds in a variety of fine manufactures, the eſtabliſhment of one ſpot, as a general market, is an inſtitution ſo uſeful that it muſt take place ſomewhere. The reaſon is evident. The profit of freight is the great inſtrument by which the particular channel of all commercial

mercial intercourſe is traced and determined.—Whatever mode of intercourſe will afford the greateſt profits of freight, that mode will be followed. In whatever intercourſe a general market comes to be eſtabliſhed, the profits of freight are more than doubled. For this reaſon, every perſon engaged in the carrying trade, will find it his intereſt to make common cauſe with all the reſt of the body of the people engaged in the ſame buſineſs, to eſtabliſh one general market. That general market will always be eſtabliſhed, where the laws of the country are moſt favourable to the perſons and property of individuals; and where the reſtraints upon export and import are the feweſt and the leaſt burdenſome. If to theſe advantages ſhould be added, in any one place, thoſe of climate and poſition, the eſtabliſhment of a general market, in that place muſt be inevitable. That the profits of freight are increaſed, that is, that intercourſe is facilitated, by the uſe of a general market, let me illuſtrate by an inſtance.

A SHIP freighted from America with the rude commodities of that country, will make the greateſt poſſible profit of the freight of that ſingle cargo, if ſhe can diſpoſe of it all in one ſpot, and return. If ſhe ſhould, from a want of demand in one, be obliged to break her bulk and go to many places, her profit will be leſſened: in as much as it is the ſame expence of labour and capital, in a veſſel of, I ſuppoſe, 100 tons burden, to carry 20 tons, as it is to carry 100 tons—but the profits on the carriage of 20 tuns can be but one fifth part of the profit on the carriage of 100. But her profit will be increaſed beyond the greateſt poſſible profit upon a firſt cargo, if ſhe can at the ſame port, where ſhe finds a demand for the whole of her rude cargo, find alſo a complete aſſortment of manufactured goods to carry

carry back. Being loaded both out and home, her profits of freight are doubled. But if in order to load herſelf both out and home, ſhe ſhould be obliged to go to ſeveral ports, either to diſpoſe of her firſt cargo, or to procure an aſſortment of a ſecond cargo, her profits of freight muſt be diminiſhed. For veſſels of bulk cannot, in the common courſe of demand, be loaded entirely with *one kind* of fine manufactured goods, as they can with one kind of rude commodity. A ſmall bulk of the firſt, will be of infinitely more value, than a great bulk of the latter.

Here then, conſiſts the advantage of one general market. That by increaſing the quantity of demand in *one* ſpot, ſhipping can come fully laden with manufactured goods of one ſort, which may afterwards be broken into aſſortments, for the return cargoes of thoſe veſſels which brought the rude commodities: and thoſe veſſels which came with manufactured goods, may freight themſelves homeward, with ſuch rude materials as they may want. The profits of freight, are therefore, more than double to all the trading parties: for in being able to carry goods in large cargoes, and in being able to freight both out and home, is the great profit of the carrying trade. Hence it is, that articles of manufacture can frequently be had from a general market, cheaper than from the very ſpot where they were manufactured. The ports which are now in poſſeſſion of this general market, principally London, Amſterdam and Rotterdam, are in point of ſituation, highly inconvenient. They have ſuperadded ſome inconveniences alſo, by their laws. Ireland has the advantage of the world in ſituation for this purpoſe. She has this further advantage, that ſhe is not at preſent incumbered by any impolitic laws, which by intangling themſelves

ſelves in the whole buſineſs of commerce, are found very difficult to be got rid of, even after the impolicy of them has been diſcovered and acknowledged.

That this is the true ſyſtem then for Ireland to purſue, will, I believe, now hardly be denied.—Let us examine the effect which the new regulations of protecting duties, will have upon this ſyſtem.

By protecting duties, you hinder the admiſſion of any manufactures into your country: and you muſt look to the induſtry of your own people, and to the length of your own capital, for your being able to ſupply any foreign demand. America is ſetting out at the ſame time with Ireland. She is connected with Ireland by the ſympathy which ſtruggles, though different in their means, yet ſimilar in their end, naturally excite. She is connected with her by the ties of private relationſhip, by old habits of intercourſe, and by ſpeaking one common language. She has no reſentments to aſſuage againſt Ireland, as ſhe has againſt Great Britain.

From theſe circumſtances it follows, that Ireland muſt become the favourite market of America, if Ireland will ſuffer herſelf to be made ſo. But America is a great market, and her wants are immediate. However Ireland might be favoured, yet if America cannot be ſupplied here, and ſupplied here *immediately*, ſhe muſt be ſupplied elſewhere.

The means by which the people of Ireland expect to afford a ſupply for foreign demand, is by protecting duties. But allowing this inſtrument the full force which its admirers imagine it poſſeſſes, it will take many years before it can raiſe up a ſufficient ſtock of induſtry, and a capital to enable it to

to ſupply a foreign demand——many years before it can even equal the home demand. Now what is to become of the American demand for all this time. The demands of America are *immediate*. Our hope of being able to ſupply that demand by the means of protecting duties, is *remote*. Are the means then adequate to the end? They are not: for while this wonderful machine of regulation is toiling to produce its effects, years will elapſe; and during thoſe years, the people of America muſt wear coats, ſhoes, hats, and ſtockings. They muſt go to thoſe places where they can procure them. And while we are patiently waiting the effects of our admirable regulation, America will have formed all her correſpondences: her markets will be eſtabliſhed, her connexions fixed, and the whole texture of her commerce will become ſo interwoven with that of other nations, that it will be impoſſible to tear them aſunder. We are then diſabling ourſelves from ſupplying a market when we have one, that we may be able to ſupply a market when we ſhall not have one to ſupply.

But what policy ought we to purſue inſtead of this? To open our ports as much as poſſible to every ſpecies of foreign intercourſe, inſtead of cloſing them againſt any. To encourage by every means in our power, every acceſſion of foreign ſupply, of foreign wealth, and foreign induſtry amongſt us, that we may be enabled to ſupport the demand in a foreign market, for which we have not ourſelves a ſufficient ſtock either of induſtry or materials.———To learn as ſpeedily as we can, that to procure the greateſt poſſible quantity of any commodity, for the ſmalleſt poſſible exertion of labour, is the only poſition, the practice of which can lead to ſolid wealth—that if you can procure from foreigners any commodity upon cheaper terms, that

that is, for the produce of leſs labour than you can make it for yourſelf, always to take it—that ſuch a dealing with a foreigner, always leads to as much induſtry at home as if you made the commodity, and produces more; for that no foreigner will ſupply you with goods, unleſs you have ſomething to give him in exchange for it; and that to procure that ſomething, you muſt work—that every individual is a better judge in his own place, of the method of turning his induſtry to profit, than any legiſlature upon earth can be—and that therefore the only ſound encouragement, which any legiſlature can give to induſtry, is to protect it from external interruption, and internal oppreſſion, and then let it work for itſelf.

THEY who will ſtudy theſe important concluſions, founded in the relations of nature, may be uſeful, if they will be buſy. But if inſtead of learning ſuch general and wholeſome truths, they ſhould give themſelves up to the fatal enthuſiaſms of their own uninformed imaginations, and yet be active—they will be active like Ravaillac. The utmoſt happineſs which can attend them is, that they ſhould continue undeceived—and like Ravaillac, die praiſing God, for having conducted their dagger to the heart of their country's glory!

PERMIT me now, before I quit you, to draw your attention to one or two local circumſtances.

THE poor manufacturers of Dublin have been exceedingly diſtreſſed: and it is fitting that ſome cauſe ſhould be aſſigned for it—that ſome remedy ſhould be diſcovered. It is ſaid, that there have been 7000 people out of employment. It is true, that ſince the peace, above 100,000 people, by the reduction of the army and navy, have been alſo deprived of their

their employments: and it is equally true, that theſe 100,000 people have contrived to ſubſiſt, by getting ſome other employments. But that is no reaſon, that 7000 people, who, as they have been more clamorous, I ſuppoſe, muſt have been more diſtreſſed, ſhould be neglected.

It has been a cuſtom with the generous nobility and gentry of this country, whenever they have heard of a ſlackneſs in the demand for the manufactures of Dublin, to enter into a ſubſcription to ſupport them. This practice, which no doubt, proceeded from a very generous principle, has produced an effect directly oppoſite to that for which it was intended. The cuſtom of ſubſcribing upon any cry of diſtreſs, has given the maſter manufacturer a very extraordinary intereſt. It has given him a profit ariſing from the *diſtreſs* of the working people whom he employs: he therefore, takes every method in his power to continue and promote it. From the knowledge which the maſter manufacturers have of the readineſs in the inhabitants of Dublin to ſubſcribe, whenever the profits of a regular trade do not entirely anſwer their moſt avaricious expectations, they immediately ſtop all their looms, turn off all their workmen, and ſend them ſtarving into the ſtreets, that by their clamours they may produce a freſh ſubſcription. The misfortune of a manufacture being ſeated in a capital city, aids this iniquity exceedingly. As ſoon as the ſubſcription has become tolerably full, they ſet to work, and continue ſo until the profits of the ſubſcription have been put into their pockets. They then turn off their workmen again; that by another clamour, another ſubſcription may be raiſed. Nay, to ſuch a refinement has this baſeneſs been carried, that upon an expectation of the city becoming full towards winter, theſe maſters have turned off all their

their workmen; tho' there has not been the leaſt ſlackneſs of demand, to juſtify ſuch a proceeding.

The aggravation of this diſtreſs being pointed out, the mitigation of it will become eaſy. If a trade cannot be ſupported without ſubſcription, the ſooner the induſtry of the people can be turned into ſome other channel the better. If it can ſupport itſelf without ſubſcription, to be clamoured into ſubſcriptions is to feed avarice and idleneſs, and to render the maſter manufacturers of Dublin the maſters of the kingdom.

Much of this evil has ariſen from the manufacture having been ſeated in a capital city. It contributes to whatever real evil may exiſt, by increaſing the actual dearneſs of the manufacture, from the actual dearneſs of ſubſiſtence in the capital. It contributes to whatever artificial evil may exiſt, by enabling a body of workmen almoſt to overawe the legiſlature; which becomes a perpetual inducement to the maſter manufacturers to ſtarve them.

Let the country gentlemen, particularly thoſe who have eſtates in the weſt and in the ſouth of Ireland, recollect one effect which muſt neceſſarily follow the granting of a protecting duty: It will be a duty to enable the manufacture to continue in Dublin, and to extend itſelf in Dublin. When once ſuch a duty ſhall come into force, it prevents for ever the removal or extenſion of the manufacture from Dublin. It will operate as a monopoly in favour of Dublin—and conſequently againſt all the reſt of the kingdom. The particular internal circumſtances of the kingdom, and its external connection, point out the fertile plains of the weſt and

and ſouth of Ireland, as the proper ſtations of the manufacture. There the great cheapneſs of labour, and the vicinity to the harbours which open the communication to America, might enable the manufacturers to contend with the length of capital, and ſuperior dexterity of a neighbouring kingdom: But a protecting duty will operate as a prohibition to every ſpecies of improvement throughout the kingdom. The capital may flouriſh, but the nation will decay.

THERE is a circumſtance which ſhould be mentioned here, as it may contribute to eaſe the minds of the people. If ever there were an adminiſtration in any country, which deſerved the confidence of the people, it is the adminiſtration of this country. It deſerves the confidence of the people, becauſe it was made by the people. Upon a late change in England, a new Lord Lieutenant was ſent over here, who choſe the men to adviſe government, who had been the conductors of the people, and in their confidence: theſe men have been continued. The preſent adminiſtration therefore, is the adminiſtration of the people. This circumſtance ſeems to have changed the nature of our conſtitution, and made the people reſponſible to government, not government to the people.

I HAVE now gone through the taſk which I had impoſed upon myſelf. It was rather to point out to you where you might acquire information, than to pretend to give it to you myſelf. I know your deſire to be active and to be uſeful. I am apprehenſive however, that you look too eagerly to that popular applauſe which is ſo frequently the ſource of activity among the gentlemen of the Houſe of Commons. But be careful. To be uſeful to the people is not always the way to gain their eſteem: and

and even if you ſhould be fortunate enough to gain it, a life of the moſt unremitting induſtry and the moſt rigid integrity may not preſerve it to you. You may remember to have ſeen a man in this country more highly graced by popular applauſe, than any of his cotemporaries. You may remember that this man deſerved it, by having found his countrymen in a ſtate of the moſt abject ſlavery, and having conducted them forward to the moſt perfect independence———that by combining the exertions of a daring genius, and a perſevering ſpirit together, he led them to the diſcovery of *unknown* land—to a land of *liberty*, unthought of, and unſought before!

You have ſeen this man, as he ought to have been, exalted by the gratitude of the people whom he had ſerved. And you have again ſeen this man, for a paltry difference of opinion with that people whom he had ſo ſerved, ſtripped of the honours which he had ſo well deſerved at their hands, and loaded with all the bitterneſs of abuſe, which a rancorous diſpoſition could ſuggeſt!

The brilliancy of his former ſervices remained unſullied; the complexion of his integrity was untainted: yet he was vilified! Tho' this ſhould teach you to ſet a true value upon popular applauſe, let it not tempt you to contemn your countrymen. It is not the vice of Iriſhmen; it is the vice of mankind. It is not Ireland; it is the habitable globe. Columbus re-traced the Atlantic, loaded with chains, by the ingratitude of companions, who owed a *new world* to his ſervices!

I have the honour to be, &c.

FINIS.

A

SPEECH

OF

EDMUND BURKE, Esq.

A

SPEECH

OF

EDMUND BURKE, Esq.

At the GUILDHALL, in BRISTOL,

PREVIOUS TO THE LATE ELECTION IN THAT CITY,

UPON

CERTAIN POINTS RELATIVE TO HIS PARLIAMENTARY CONDUCT.

THE SECOND EDITION.

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M.DCC.LXXX.

[Price, a BRITISH SHILLING.]

SPEECH, &c.

Mr. Mayor, and Gentlemen,

I AM extremely pleaſed at the appearance of this large and reſpectable meeting. The ſteps I may be obliged to take will want the ſanction of a conſiderable authority; and in explaining any thing which may appear doubtful in my public conduct, I muſt naturally deſire a very full audience.

I have been backward to begin my canvaſs. The diſſolution of the Parliament was uncertain; and it did not become me, by an unſeaſonable importunity, to appear diffident of the effect of my ſix years endeavours to pleaſe you. I had ſerved the city of Briſtol honourably; and the city of Briſtol had no reaſon to think, that the means of honourable ſervice to the public, were become indifferent to me.

I found on my arrival here, that three gentlemen had been long in eager purſuit of an object which but two of us can obtain. I found, that they had all met with

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encouragement. A conteſted election in ſuch a city as this, is no light thing. I pauſed on the brink of the precipice. Theſe three gentlemen, by various merits, and on various titles, I made no doubt, were worthy of your favour. I ſhall never attempt to raiſe myſelf by depreciating the merits of my competitors. In the complexity and confuſion of theſe croſs purſuits, I wiſhed to take the authentic public ſenſe of my friends upon a buſineſs of ſo much delicacy. I wiſhed to take your opinion along with me; that if I ſhould give up the conteſt at the very beginning, my ſurrender of my poſt may not ſeem the effect of inconſtancy, or timidity, or anger, or diſguſt, or indolence, or any other temper unbecoming a man who has engaged in the public ſervice. If on the contrary, I ſhould undertake the election, and fail of ſucceſs, I was full as anxious, that it ſhould be manifeſt to the whole world, that the peace of the city had not been broken by my raſhneſs, preſumption, or fond conceit of my own merit.

I am not come, by a falſe and counterfeit ſhew of deference to your judgment, to ſeduce it in my favour. I aſk it ſeriouſly and unaffectedly. If you wiſh that I ſhould retire, I ſhall not conſider that advice as a cenſure upon my conduct, or an alteration

alteration in your ſentiments; but as a rational ſubmiſſion to the circumſtances of affairs. If, on the contrary, you ſhould think it proper for me to proceed on my canvaſs, if you will riſque the trouble on your part, I will riſque it on mine. My pretenſions are ſuch as you cannot be aſhamed of, whether they ſucceed or fail.

If you call upon me, I ſhall ſolicit the favour of the city upon manly ground. I come before you with the plain confidence of an honeſt ſervant in the equity of a candid and diſcerning maſter. I come to claim your approbation, not to amuſe you with vain apologies, or with profeſſions ſtill more vain and ſenſeleſs. I have lived too long to be ſerved by apologies, or to ſtand in need of them. The part I have acted has been in open day; and to hold out to a conduct which ſtands in that clear and ſteady light for all its good and all its evil, to hold out to that conduct the paltry winking tapers of excuſes and promiſes—I never will do it.—They may obſcure it with their ſmoke; but they never can illumine ſunſhine by ſuch a flame as theirs.

I am ſenſible that no endeavours have been left untried to injure me in your opinion. But the uſe of character is to be a

ſhield againſt calumny. I could wiſh, undoubtedly (if idle wiſhes were not the moſt idle of all things) to make every part of my conduct agreeable to every one of my conſtituents. But in ſo great a city, and ſo greatly divided as this, it is weak to expect it.

In ſuch a diſcordancy of ſentiments, it is better to look to the nature of things than to the humours of men. The very attempt towards pleaſing every body, diſcovers a temper always flaſhy, and often falſe and inſincere. Therefore, as I have proceeded ſtrait onward in my conduct, ſo I will proceed in my account of thoſe parts of it which have been moſt excepted to. But I muſt firſt beg leave juſt to hint to you, that we may ſuffer very great detriment by being open to every talker. It is not to be imagined, how much of ſervice is loſt from ſpirits full of activity and full of energy, who are preſſing, who are ruſhing forward, to great and capital objects, when you oblige them to be continually looking back. Whilſt they are defending one ſervice, they defraud you of an hundred. Applaud us when we run; conſole us when we fall; chear us when we recover; but let us paſs on—for God's ſake, let us paſs on.

Do you think, Gentlemen, that every public act in the ſix years ſince I ſtood in this place

place before you—that all the arduous things which have been done in this eventful period, which has crowded into a few years ſpace the revolutions of an age, can be opened to you on their fair grounds in half an hour's converſation?

But it is no reaſon, becauſe there is a bad mode of enquiry, that there ſhould be no examination at all. Moſt certainly it is our duty to examine; it is our intereſt too.—But it muſt be with diſcretion; with an attention to all the circumſtances, and to all the motives; like ſound judges, and not like cavilling pettyfoggers and quibbling pleaders, prying into flaws and hunting for exceptions. Look, Gentlemen, to the *whole tenour* of your member's conduct. Try whether his ambition or his avarice have juſtled him out of the ſtrait line of duty; or whether that grand foe of the offices of active life, that maſter-vice in men of buſineſs, a degenerate and inglorious ſloth, has made him flag and languiſh in his courſe? This is the object of our enquiry. If our member's conduct can bear this touch, mark it for ſterling. He may have fallen into errors; he muſt have faults; but our error is greater, and our fault is radically ruinous to ourſelves, if we do not bear, if we do not even applaud, the whole compound and mixed maſs of ſuch a character. Not to act thus is folly;

folly; I had almoſt ſaid it is impiety. He cenſures God, who quarrels with the imperfections of man.

Gentlemen, We muſt not be peeviſh with thoſe who ſerve the people. For none will ſerve us whilſt there is a court to ſerve, but thoſe who are of a nice and jealous honour. They who think every thing, in compariſon of that honour, to be duſt and aſhes, will not bear to have it ſoiled and impaired by thoſe, for whoſe ſake they make a thouſand ſacrifices, to preſerve it immaculate and whole. We ſhall either drive ſuch men from the public ſtage, or we ſhall ſend them to the court for protection; where, if they muſt ſacrifice their reputation, they will at leaſt ſecure their intereſt. Depend upon it, that the lovers of freedom will be free. None will violate their conſcience to pleaſe us, in order afterwards to diſcharge that conſcience, which they have violated, by doing us faithful and affectionate ſervice. If we degrade and deprave their minds by ſervility, it will be abſurd to expect, that they who are creeping and abject toward us, will ever be bold and uncorruptible aſſertors of our freedom, againſt the moſt ſeducing and the moſt formidable of all powers. No! human nature is not ſo formed; nor ſhall we improve the faculties, or better the morals of public men, by our poſſeſſion of the moſt infallible

fallible receipt in the world for making cheats and hypocrites.

Let me ſay with plainneſs, I who am no longer in a public character, that if by a fair, by an indulgent, by a gentlemanly behaviour to our repreſentatives, we do not give confidence to their minds, and a liberal ſcope to their underſtandings; if we do not permit our members to act upon a very enlarged view of things; we ſhall at length infallibly degrade our national repreſentation into a confuſed and ſcuffling buſtle of local agency. When the popular member is narrowed in his ideas, and rendered timid in his proceedings, the ſervice of the crown will be the ſole nurſery of ſtateſmen. Among the frolics of the court, it may at length take that of attending to its buſineſs. Then the monopoly of mental power will be added to the power of all other kinds it poſſeſſes. On the ſide of the people there will be nothing but impotence: for ignorance is impotence; narrowneſs of mind is impotence; timidity is itſelf impotence, and makes all other qualities that go along with it, impotent and uſeleſs.

At preſent, it is the plan of the court to make its ſervants inſignificant. If the people ſhould fall into the ſame humour, and ſhould

ſhould chooſe their ſervants on the ſame principles of mere obſequiouſneſs, and flexibility, and total vacancy or indifference of opinion in all public matters, then no part of the ſtate will be found; and it will be in vain to think of ſaving of it.

I thought it very expedient at this time to give you this candid counſel; and with this counſel I would willingly cloſe, if the matters which at various times have been objected to me in this city concerned only myſelf, and my own election. Theſe charges, I think, are four in number;—my neglect of a due attention to my conſtituents; the not paying more frequent viſits here;—my conduct on the affairs of the firſt Iriſh trade acts;—my opinion and mode of proceeding on Lord Beauchamp's Debtors Bills;—and my votes on the late affairs of the Roman Catholics. All of theſe (except perhaps the firſt) relate to matters of very conſiderable public concern; and it is not leſt you ſhould cenſure me improperly, but leſt you ſhould form improper opinions on matters of ſome moment to you, that I trouble you at all upon the ſubject. My conduct is of ſmall importance.

With regard to the firſt charge, my friends have ſpoken to me of it in the ſtyle of amicable

amicable expoſtulation ; not ſo much blaming the thing, as lamenting the effects.—Others, leſs partial to me, were leſs kind in aſſigning the motives. I admit, there is a decorum and propriety in a member of parliament's paying a reſpectful court to his conſtituents. If I were conſcious to myſelf that pleaſure or diſſipation, or low unworthy occupations, had detained me from perſonal attendance on you, I would readily admit my fault, and quietly ſubmit to the penalty. But, Gentlemen, I live at an hundred miles diſtance from Briſtol ; and at the end of a ſeſſion I come to my own houſe, fatigued in body and in mind, to a little repoſe, and to a very little attention to my family and my private concerns. A viſit to Briſtol is always a ſort of canvaſs ; elſe it will do more harm than good. To paſs from the toils of a ſeſſion to the toils of a canvaſs, is the furtheſt thing in the world from repoſe. I could hardly ſerve you *as I have done*, and court you too. Moſt of you have heard, that I do not very remarkably ſpare myſelf in *public* buſineſs ; and in the *private* buſineſs of my conſtituents I have done very near as much as thoſe who have nothing elſe to do. My canvaſs of you was not on the Change, nor in the county meetings, nor in the clubs of this city. It was in the Houſe of Commons ; it was at the Cuſtom-houſe ; it was

at

at the Council; it was at the Treaſury; it was at the Admiralty. I canvaſſed you through your affairs, and not your perſons. I was not only your repreſentative as a body; I was the agent, the ſolicitor of individuals; I ran about wherever your affairs could call me; and in acting for you I often appeared rather as a ſhip-broker, than as a member of parliament. There was nothing too laborious, or too low for me to undertake. The meanneſs of the buſineſs was raiſed by the dignity of the object. If ſome leſſer matters have ſlipped through my fingers, it was becauſe I filled my hands too full; and in my eagerneſs to ſerve you, took in more than any hands could graſp. Several gentlemen ſtand round me who are my willing witneſſes; and there are others who, if they were here, would be ſtill better; becauſe they would be unwilling witneſſes to the ſame truth. It was in the middle of a ſummer reſidence in London, and in the middle of a negociation at the Admiralty for your trade, that I was called to Briſtol; and this late viſit, at this late day, has been poſſibly in prejudice to your affairs.

Since I have touched upon this matter, let me ſay, gentlemen, that if I had a diſpoſition, or a right to complain, I have ſome cauſe of complaint on my ſide. With a petition of this city in my hand, paſſed through the corporation

poration without a diſſenting voice, a petition in uniſon with almoſt the whole voice of the kingdom, (with whoſe formal thanks I was covered over) whilſt I laboured on no leſs than five bills for a public reform, and fought, againſt the oppoſition of great abilities, and of the greateſt power, every clauſe, and every word of the largeſt of thoſe bills, almoſt to the very laſt day of a very long ſeſſion; all this time a canvaſs in Briſtol was as calmly carried on as if I were dead. I was conſidered as a man wholly out of the queſtion. Whilſt I watched, and faſted, and ſweated in the Houſe of Commons—by the moſt eaſy and ordinary arts of election, by dinners and viſits, by "How do you do's," and, "My worthy friends," I was to be quietly moved out of my ſeat—and promiſes were made, and engagements entered into, without any exception or reſerve, as if my laborious zeal in my duty had been a regular abdication of my truſt.

To open my whole heart to you on this ſubject, I do confeſs however, that there were other times beſides the two years in which I did viſit you, when I was not wholly without leiſure for repeating that mark of my reſpect. But I could not bring my mind to ſee you. You remember, that in the beginning of this American war (that æra of calamity, diſgrace and downfall, an æra which no feeling mind will ever mention without a tear

a tear for England) you were greatly divided; and a very ſtrong body, if not the ſtrongeſt, oppoſed itſelf to the madneſs which every art and every power were employed to render popular, in order that the errors of the rulers might be loſt in the general blindneſs of the nation. This oppoſition continued until after our great, but moſt unfortunate victory at Long Iſland. Then all the mounds and banks of our conſtancy were borne down at once; and the phrenſy of the American war broke in upon us like a deluge. This victory, which ſeemed to put an immediate end to all difficulties, perfected us in that ſpirit of domination, which our unparalleled proſperity had but too long nurtured. We had been ſo very powerful, and ſo very proſperous, that even the humbleſt of us were degraded into the vices and follies of kings. We loſt all meaſure between means and ends; and our headlong deſires became our politics and our morals. All men who wiſhed for peace, or retained any ſentiments of moderation, were overborne or ſilenced; and this city was led by every artifice (and probably with the more management, becauſe I was one of your members) to diſtinguiſh itſelf by its zeal for that fatal cauſe. In this temper of yours and of my mind, I ſhould ſooner have fled to the extremities of the earth, than have ſhewn myſelf here. I, who ſaw in every American victory (for you

you have had a long ſeries of theſe misfortunes) the germ and ſeed of the naval powers of France and Spain, which all our heat and warmth againſt America was only hatching into life,—I ſhould not have been a welcome viſitant with the brow and the language of ſuch feelings. When afterwards, the other face of your calamity was turned upon you, and ſhewed itſelf in defeat and diſtreſs, I ſhunned you full as much. I felt ſorely this variety in our wretchedneſs; and I did not wiſh to have the leaſt appearance of inſulting you with that ſhew of ſuperiority, which, though it may not be aſſumed, is generally ſuſpected in a time of calamity, from thoſe whoſe previous warnings have been deſpiſed. I could not bear to ſhew you a repreſentative whoſe face did not reflect that of his conſtituents; a face that could not joy in your joys, and ſorrow in your ſorrows. But time at length has made us all of one opinion; and we have all opened our eyes on the true nature of the American war, to the true nature of all its ſucceſſes and all its failures.

In that public ſtorm too I had my private feelings. I had ſeen blown down and proſtrate on the ground ſeveral of thoſe houſes to whom I was chiefly indebted for the honour this city has done me. I confeſs, that whilſt the wounds of thoſe I loved were yet green,

green, I could not bear to ſhew myſelf in pride and triumph in that place into which their partiality had brought me, and to appear at feaſts and rejoicings, in the midſt of the grief and calamity of my warm friends, my zealous ſupporters, my generous benefactors. This is a true, unvarniſhed, undiſguiſed ſtate of the affair. You will judge of it.

This is the only one of the charges in which I am perſonally concerned. As to the other matters objected againſt me, which in their turn I ſhall mention to you, remember once more I do not mean to extenuate or excuſe. Why ſhould I, when the things charged are among thoſe upon which I found all my reputation? What would be left to me, if I myſelf was the man, who ſoftened, and blended, and diluted, and weakened, all the diſtinguiſhing colours of my life, ſo as to leave nothing diſtinct and determinate in my whole conduct?

It has been ſaid, and it is the ſecond charge, that in the queſtions of the Iriſh trade, I did not conſult the intereſt of my conſtituents, or, to ſpeak out ſtrongly, that I rather acted as a native of Ireland, than as an Engliſh member of parliament.

I certainly have very warm good wiſhes for the place of my birth. But the ſphere of

of my duties is my true country. It was as a man attached to your intereſts, and zealous for the conſervation of your power and dignity, that I acted on that occaſion, and on all occaſions. You were involved in the American war. A new world of policy was opened, to which it was neceſſary we ſhould conform whether we would or not; and my only thought was how to conform to our ſituation in ſuch a manner as to unite to this kingdom, in proſperity and in affection, whatever remained of the empire. I was true to my old, ſtanding, invariable principle, that all things, which came from Great Britain, ſhould iſſue as a gift of her bounty and beneficence, rather than as claims recovered againſt a ſtruggling litigant; or at leaſt, that if your beneficence obtained no credit in your conceſſions, yet that they ſhould appear the ſalutary proviſions of your wiſdom and foreſight; not as things wrung from you with your blood, by the cruel gripe of a rigid neceſſity. The firſt conceſſions, by being (much againſt my will) mangled and ſtripped of the parts which were neceſſary to make out their juſt correſpondence and connection in trade, were of no uſe. The next year a feeble attempt was made to bring the thing into better ſhape. This attempt (countenanced by the miniſter) on the very firſt appearance of

of ſome popular uneaſineſs, was, after a conſiderable progreſs through the houſe, thrown out by *him*.

What was the conſequence? The whole kingdom of Ireland was inſtantly in a flame. Threatened by foreigners, and as they thought, inſulted by England, they reſolved at once to reſiſt the power of France, and to caſt off yours. As for us, we were able neither to protect nor to reſtrain them. Forty thouſand men were raiſed and diſciplined without commiſſion from the crown. Two illegal armies were ſeen with banners diſplayed at the ſame time, and in the ſame country. No executive magiſtrate, no judicature, in Ireland, would acknowledge the legality of the army which bore the king's commiſſion; and no law, or appearance of law authoriſed the army commiſſioned by itſelf. In this unexampled ſtate of things, which the leaſt error, the leaſt treſpaſs on the right or left, would have hurried down the precipice into an abyſs of blood and confuſion, the people of Ireland demand a freedom of trade with arms in their hands. They interdict all commerce between the two nations. They deny all new ſupply in the Houſe of Commons, although in time of war. They ſtint the truſt of the old revenue, given for two years to all the king's predeceſſors,

predeceſſors, to ſix months. The Britiſh Parliament in a former ſeſſion frightened into a limited conceſſion by the menaces of Ireland, frightened out of it by the menaces of England, was again frightened back again, and made an univerſal ſurrender of all that had been thought the peculiar, reſerved, uncommunicable rights of England;—The excluſive commerce of America, of Africa, of the Weſt-Indies—all the enumerations of the acts of navigation—all the manufactures,—iron, glaſs, even the laſt pledge of jealouſy and pride, the intereſt hid in the ſecret of our hearts, the inveterate prejudice moulded into the conſtitution of our frame, even the ſacred fleece itſelf, all went together. No reſerve; no exception; no debate; no diſcuſſion. A ſudden light broke in upon us all. It broke in, not through well-contrived and well-diſpoſed windows, but through flaws and breaches; through the yawning chaſms of our ruin. We were taught wiſdom by humiliation. No town in England preſumed to have a prejudice; or dared to mutter a petition. What was worſe, the whole Parliament of England, which retained authority for nothing but ſurrenders, was deſpoiled of every ſhadow of its ſuperintendance. It was, without any qualification, denied in theory, as it had been trampled upon in practice. This ſcene

of ſhame and diſgrace, has, in a manner whilſt I am ſpeaking, ended by the perpetual eſtabliſhment of a military power, in the dominions of this crown without conſent of the Britiſh legiſlature *, contrary to the policy of the conſtitution, contrary to the declaration of right: and by this your liberties are ſwept away along with your ſupreme authority—and both, linked together from the beginning, have, I am afraid, both together periſhed for ever.

What! Gentlemen, was I not to foreſee, or foreſeeing, was I not to endeavour to ſave you from all theſe multiplied miſchiefs and diſgraces? Would the little, ſilly canvaſs prattle of obeying inſtructions, and having no opinions but yours, and ſuch idle ſenſeleſs tales, which amuſe the vacant ears of unthinking men, have ſaved you from "the pelting of that pitileſs ſtorm," to which the looſe improvidence, the cowardly raſhneſs of thoſe who dare not look danger in the face, ſo as to provide againſt it in time, have expoſed this degraded nation, beat down and proſtrate on the earth, unſheltered, unarmed, unreſiſting? Was I an Iriſhman on that day, that I boldly withſtood our pride? or on the day that I hung

* Iriſh perpetual mutiny act.

down

down my head, and wept in ſhame and ſilence over the humiliation of Great Britain? I became unpopular in England for the one, and in Ireland for the other. What then! What obligation lay on me to be popular? I was bound to ſerve both kingdoms. To be pleaſed with my ſervice, was their affair, not mine.

I was an Iriſhman in the Iriſh buſineſs, juſt as much as I was an American, when on the ſame principles, I wiſhed you to concede to America, at a time when ſhe prayed conceſſion at our feet. Juſt as much was I an American when I wiſhed Parliament to offer terms in victory, and not to wait the well-choſen hour of defeat, for making good by weakneſs, and by ſupplication, a claim of prerogative, pre eminence, and authority.

Inſtead of requiring it from me, as a point of duty, to kindle with your paſſions, had you all been as cool as I was, you would have been ſaved diſgraces and diſtreſſes that are unutterable. Do you remember our commiſſion? We ſent out a ſolemn embaſſy acroſs the Atlantic ocean, to lay the Crown, the Peerage, the Commons of Great Britain, at the feet of the American Congreſs. That our diſgrace might want no ſort of

brightening and burniſhing, obſerve who they were that compoſed this famous embaſſy. My Lord Carliſle is among the firſt ranks of our nobility. He is the identical man who but two years before, had been put forward, at the opening of a ſeſſion in the Houſe of Lords, as the mover of an haughty and rigorous addreſs againſt America. He was put in the front of the embaſſy of ſubmiſſion. Mr. Eden was taken from the office of Lord Suffolk, to whom he was then under ſecretary of ſtate; from the office of that Lord Suffolk, who but a few weeks before, in his place in Parliament, did not deign to enquire where a Congreſs of vagrants was to be found. This Lord Suffolk ſent Mr. Eden to find theſe vagrants, without knowing where his King's Generals were to be found, who were joined in the ſame commiſſion of ſupplicating thoſe whom they were ſent to ſubdue. They enter the capital of America only to abandon it; and theſe aſſertors and repreſentatives of the dignity of England, at the tail of a flying army, let fly their Parthian ſhafts of memorials and remonſtrances at random behind them. Their promiſes and their offers, their flatteries, their menaces, were all deſpiſed; and we were ſaved the diſgrace of their formal reception, only becauſe the Congreſs ſcorned to receive them; whilſt

whilſt the State-houſe of independent Philadelphia opened her doors to the public entry of the ambaſſadors of France. From war and blood, we went to ſubmiſſion; and from ſubmiſſion plunged back again to war and blood; to deſolate and be deſolated, without meaſure, hope, or end. I am a Royaliſt, I bluſhed for this degradation of the Crown. I am a Whig, I bluſhed for the diſhonour of Parliament. I am a true Engliſhman, I felt to the quick for the diſgrace of England. I am a Man, I felt for the melancholy reverſe of human affairs, in the fall of the firſt power in the world.

To read what was approaching in Ireland, in the black and bloody characters of the American war, was a painful, but it was a neceſſary part of my public duty. For, Gentlemen, it is not your fond deſires or mine that can alter the nature of things; by contending againſt which what have we got, or ſhall ever get, but defeat and ſhame? I did not obey your inſtructions: No. I conformed to the inſtructions of truth and nature, and maintained your intereſt, againſt your opinions, with a conſtancy that became me. A repreſentative worthy of you, ought to be a perſon of ſtability. I am to look, indeed, to your opinions; but to ſuch opinions as you and I *muſt* have five

years

years hence. I was not to look to the flaſh of the day. I knew that you choſe me, in my place, along with others, to be a pillar of the ſtate, and not a weathercock on the top of the edifice, exalted for my levity and verſatility, and of no uſe but to indicate the ſhiftings of every faſhionable gale. Would to God, the value of my ſentiments on Ireland and on America had been at this day a ſubject of doubt and diſcuſſion! No matter what my ſufferings had been, ſo that this kingdom had kept the authority I wiſhed it to maintain, by a grave foreſight, and by an equitable temperance in the uſe of its power.

The next article of charge on my public conduct, and that which I find rather the moſt prevalent of all, is Lord Beauchamp's bill. I mean his bill of laſt ſeſſion for reforming the law-proceſs concerning impriſonment. It is ſaid, to aggravate the offence, that I treated the petition of this city with contempt even in preſenting it to the Houſe, and expreſſed myſelf in terms of marked diſreſpect. Had this latter part of the charge been true, no merits on the ſide of the queſtion which I took, could poſſibly excuſe me. But I am incapable of treating this city with diſreſpect. Very fortunately, at this minute (if my bad eyeſight does not deceive

deceive me) * the worthy gentleman deputed on this buſineſs ſtands directly before me. To him I appeal, whether I did not, though it militated with my oldeſt and my moſt recent public opinions, deliver the petition with a ſtrong, and more than uſual recommendation to the conſideration of the Houſe, on account of the character and conſequence of thoſe who ſigned it. I believe the worthy gentleman will tell you, that the very day I received it, I applied to the Solicitor, now the Attorney General, to give it an immediate conſideration; and he moſt obligingly and inſtantly conſented to employ a great deal of his very valuable time, to write an explanation of the bill. I attended the Committee with all poſſible care and diligence, in order that every objection of yours might meet with a ſolution; or produce an alteration. I entreated your learned Recorder (always ready in buſineſs in which you take a concern) to attend. But what will you ſay to thoſe who blame me for ſupporting Lord Beauchamp's bill, as a diſreſpectful treatment of your petition, when you hear, that out of reſpect to you, I myſelf was the cauſe of the loſs of that very bill? for the noble Lord who brought it in, and who, I muſt ſay, has

* Mr. Williams.

much

much merit for this and ſome other meaſures, at my requeſt conſented to put it off for a week, which the Speaker's illneſs lengthened to a fortnight; and then the frantic tumult about Popery, drove that and every rational buſineſs from the Houſe. So that if I choſe to make a defence of myſelf, on the little principles of a culprit pleading in his exculpation, I might not only ſecure my acquittal, but make merit with the oppoſers of the bill. But I ſhall do no ſuch thing. The truth is, that I did occaſion the loſs of the bill, and by a delay cauſed by my reſpect to you. But ſuch an event was never in my contemplation. And I am ſo far from taking credit for the defeat of that meaſure, that I cannot ſufficiently lament my miſfortune, if but one man, who ought to be at large, has paſſed a year in priſon by my means. I am a debtor to the debtors. I confeſs judgment. I owe, what, if ever it be in my power, I ſhall moſt certainly pay,——ample atonement, and uſurious amends to liberty and humanity for my unhappy lapſe. For, Gentlemen, Lord Beauchamp's bill was a law of juſtice and policy, as far as it went; I ſay as far as it went, for its fault was its being, in the remedial part, miſerably defective.

There

There are two capital faults in our law with relation to civil debts. One is, that every man is preſumed ſolvent. A preſumption, in innumerable caſes, directly againſt truth. Therefore the debtor is ordered, on a ſuppoſition of ability and fraud, to be coerced his liberty until he makes payment. By this means, in all caſes of civil inſolvency, without a pardon from his creditor, he is to be impriſoned for life:—and thus a miſerable miſtaken invention of artificial ſcience, operates to change a civil into a criminal judgment, and to ſcourge misfortune or indiſcretion with a puniſhment which the law does not inflict on the greateſt crimes.

The next fault is, that the inflicting of that puniſhment is not on the opinion of an equal and public judge; but is referred to the arbitrary diſcretion of a private, nay intereſted, and irritated, individual. He, who formally is, and ſubſtantially ought to be, the judge, is in reality no more than miniſterial, a mere executive inſtrument of a private man, who is at once judge and party. Every idea of judicial order is ſubverted by this procedure. If the inſolvency be no crime, why is it puniſhed with arbitrary impriſonment? If it be a crime, why is it delivered into private hands to

pardon

pardon without diſcretion, or to puniſh without mercy and without meaſure?

To theſe faults, groſs and cruel faults in our law, the excellent principle of Lord Beauchamp's bill applied ſome ſort of remedy. I know that credit muſt be preſerved; but equity muſt be preſerved too; and it is impoſſible, that any thing ſhould be neceſſary to commerce, which is inconſiſtent with juſtice. The principle of credit was not weakened by that bill. God forbid! The enforcement of that credit was only put into the ſame public judicial hands on which we depend for our lives, and all that makes life dear to us. But, indeed, this buſineſs was taken up too warmly both here and elſewhere. The bill was extremely miſtaken. It was ſuppoſed to enact what it never enacted; and complaints were made of clauſes in it as novelties, which exiſted before the noble Lord that brought in the bill was born. There was a fallacy that run through the whole of the objections. The gentlemen who oppoſed the bill, always argued, as if the option lay between that bill and the antient law.—But this is a grand miſtake. For practically, the option is between, not that bill and the old law, but between that bill and thoſe occaſional laws called acts of grace. For the operation

operation of the old law is ſo ſavage, and ſo inconvenient to ſociety, that for a long time paſt, once in every parliament, and lately twice, the legiſlature has been obliged to make a general arbitrary jail-delivery, and at once to ſet open, by its ſovereign authority, all the priſons in England.

Gentlemen, I never reliſhed acts of grace; nor ever ſubmitted to them but from deſpair of better. They are a diſhonourable invention, by which, not from humanity, not from policy, but merely becauſe we have not room enough to hold theſe victims of the abſurdity of our laws, we turn looſe upon the public three or four thouſand naked wretches, corrupted by the habits, debaſed by the ignominy of a priſon. If the creditor had a right to thoſe carcaſes as a natural ſecurity for his property, I am ſure we have no right to deprive him of that ſecurity. But if the few pounds of fleſh were not neceſſary to his ſecurity, we had not a right to detain the unfortunate debtor, without any benefit at all to the perſon who confined him.—Take it as you will, we commit injuſtice. Now Lord Beauchamp's bill intended to do deliberately, and with great caution and circumſpection, upon each ſ[illegible]ral caſe, and with all attention to the juſt claimant, what acts of grace do

in

in a much greater meaſure, and with very little care, caution, or deliberation.

I ſuſpect that here too, if we contrive to oppoſe this bill, we ſhall be found in a ſtruggle againſt the nature of things. For as we grow enlightened, the public will not bear, for any length of time, to pay for the maintenance of whole armies of priſoners; nor, at their own expence, ſubmit to keep jails as a ſort of garriſons, merely to fortify the abſurd principle of making men judges in their own cauſe. For credit has little or no concern in this cruelty. I ſpeak in a commercial aſſembly. You know, that credit is given, becauſe capital *muſt* be employed; that men calculate the chances of inſolvency: and they either withhold the credit, or make the debtor pay the riſque in the price. The counting-houſe has no alliance with the jail. Holland underſtands trade as well as we, and ſhe has done much more than this obnoxious bill intended to do. There was not when Mr. Howard viſited Holland, more than one priſoner for debt in the great city of Rotterdam. Altho' Lord Beauchamp's act (which was previous to this bill, and intended to feel the way for it) has already preſerved liberty to thouſands; and though it is not three years ſince the laſt act of grace paſſed, yet by Mr. Howard's laſt account, there

there were near three thouſand again in jail. I cannot name this gentleman without remarking, that his labours and writings have done much to open the eyes and hearts of mankind. He has viſited all Europe,—not to ſurvey the ſumptuouſneſs of palaces, or the ſtatelineſs of temples ; not to make accurate meaſurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a ſcale of the curioſity of modern art ; not to collect medals, or collate manuſcripts :—but to dive into the depths of dungeons ; to plunge into the infection of hoſpitals ; to ſurvey the manſions of ſorrow and pain ; to take the gage and dimenſions of miſery, depreſſion, and contempt ; to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to viſit the forſaken, and to compare and collate the diſtreſſes of all men in all countries. His plan is original ; and it is as full of genius as it is of humanity. It was a voyage of diſcovery ; a circumnavigation of charity. Already the benefit of his labour is felt more or leſs in every country : I hope he will anticipate his final reward, by ſeeing all its effects fully realized in his own. He will receive, not by retail but in groſs, the reward of thoſe who viſit the priſoner ; and he has ſo foreſtalled and monopolized this branch of charity, that there will be, I truſt,

little

little room to merit by ſuch acts of benevolence hereafter.

Nothing remains now to trouble you with, but the fourth charge againſt me—the buſineſs of the Roman Catholics. It is a buſineſs cloſely connected with the reſt. They are all on one and the ſame principle. My little ſcheme of conduct, ſuch as it is, is all arranged. I could do nothing but what I have done on this ſubject, without confounding the whole train of my ideas, and diſturbing the whole order of my life. Gentlemen, I ought to apologize to you, for ſeeming to think any thing at all neceſſary to be ſaid upon this matter. The calumny is fitter to be ſcrawled with the midnight chalk of incendiaries, with "No Popery," on walls and doors of devoted houſes, than to be mentioned in any civiliſed company. I had heard, that the ſpirit of diſcontent on that ſubject was very prevalent here. With pleaſure I find that I have been groſsly miſinformed. If it exiſts at all in this city, the laws have cruſhed its exertions, and our morals have ſhamed its appearance in day-light. I have purſued this ſpirit wherever I could trace it; but it ſtill fled from me. It was a ghoſt, which all had heard of, but none had ſeen. None would acknowledge that he thought the public proceeding with regard

to

to our Catholic diſſenters to be blameable; but ſeveral were ſorry it had made an ill impreſſion upon others, and that my intereſt was hurt by my ſhare in the buſineſs. I find with ſatisfaction and pride, that not above four or five in this city (and I dare ſay theſe miſled by ſome groſs miſrepreſentation) have ſigned that ſymbol of deluſion and bond of ſedition, that libel on the national religion and Engliſh character, the Proteſtant Aſſociation. It is therefore, Gentlemen, not by way of cure but of prevention, and leſt the arts of wicked men may prevail over the integrity of any one amongſt us, that I think it neceſſary to open to you the merits of this tranſaction pretty much at large; and I beg your patience upon it: for, although the reaſonings that have been uſed to depreciate the act are of little force, and tho' the authority of the men concerned in this ill deſign is not very impoſing; yet the audaciouſneſs of theſe conſpirators againſt the national honour, and the extenſive wickedneſs of their attempts, have raiſed perſons of little importance to a degree of evil eminence, and imparted a ſort of ſiniſter dignity to proceedings that had their origin in only the meaneſt and blindeſt malice.

In explaining to you the proceedings of Parliament which have been complained of, I will

I will ſtate to you,—firſt, the thing that was done;—next, the perſons who did it;—and, laſtly, the grounds and reaſons upon which the legiſlature proceeded in this deliberate act of public juſtice and public prudence.

Gentlemen, The condition of our nature is ſuch, that we buy our bleſſings at a price. The Reformation, one of the greateſt periods of human improvement, was a time of trouble and confuſion. The vaſt ſtructure of ſuperſtition and tyranny, which had been for ages in rearing, and which was combined with the intereſt of the great and of the many; which was moulded into the laws, the manners, and civil inſtitutions of nations, and blended with the frame and policy of ſtates; could not be brought to the ground without a fearful ſtruggle; nor could it fall without a violent concuſſion of itſelf and all about it. When this great revolution was attempted in a more regular mode by government, it was oppoſed by plots and ſeditions of the people; when by popular efforts, it was repreſſed as rebellion by the hand of power, and bloody executions (often bloodily returned) marked the whole of its progreſs through all its ſtages. The affairs of religion, which are no longer heard of in the tumult of our preſent contentions, made

made a principal ingredient in the wars and politics of that time; the enthuſiaſm of religion threw a gloom over the politics; and political intereſts poiſoned and perverted the ſpirit of religion upon all ſides. The Proteſtant religion in that violent ſtruggle, infected, as the Popiſh had been before, by worldly intereſts and worldly paſſions, became a perſecutor in its turn, ſometimes of the new ſects, which carried their own principles further than it was convenient to the original reformers; and always of the body from whom they parted; and this perſecuting ſpirit aroſe, not only, from the bitterneſs of retaliation, but from the mercileſs policy of fear.

It was long before the ſpirit of true piety and true wiſdom, involved in the principles of the Reformation, could be depurated from the dregs and feculence of the contention with which it was carried through. However, until this be done, the Reformation is not complete; and thoſe who think themſelves good Proteſtants, from their animoſity to others, are in that reſpect no Proteſtants at all. It was at firſt thought neceſſary, perhaps, to oppoſe to Popery another Popery, to get the better of it. Whatever was the cauſe, laws were made in many countries, and in this kingdom in particular,

againſt Papiſts, which are as bloody as any of thoſe which had been enacted by the Popiſh princes and ſtates ; and where thoſe laws were not bloody, in my opinion, they were worſe ; as they were ſlow, cruel outrages on our nature, and kept men alive only to inſult in their perſons, every one of the rights and feelings of humanity. I paſs thoſe ſtatutes, becauſe I would ſpare your pious ears the repetition of ſuch ſhocking things ; and I come to that particular law, the repeal of which has produced ſo many unnatural and unexpected conſequences.

A ſtatute was fabricated in the year 1699, by which the ſaying maſs (a church-ſervice in the Latin tongue, not exactly the ſame as our Liturgy, but very near it, and containing no offence whatſoever againſt the laws, or againſt good morals) was forged into a crime puniſhable with perpetual impriſonment. The teaching ſchool, an uſeful and virtuous occupation, even the teaching in a private family, was in every Catholic ſubjected to the ſame unproportioned puniſhment. Your induſtry, and the bread of your children, was taxed for a pecuniary reward to ſtimulate avarice to do what nature refuſed, to inform and proſecute on this law. Every Roman Catholic was, under

der the ſame act, to forfeit his eſtate to his neareſt Proteſtant relation, until, through a profeſſion of what he did not believe, he redeemed by his hypocriſy, what the law had transferred to the kinſman as the recompence of his profligacy. When thus turned out of doors from his paternal eſtate, he was diſabled from acquiring any other by any induſtry, donation, or charity; but was rendered a foreigner in his native land, only becauſe he retained the religion, along with the property, handed down to him from thoſe who had been the old inhabitants of that land before him.

Does any one who hears me approve this ſcheme of things, or think there is common juſtice, common ſenſe, or common honeſty in any part of it? If any does, let him ſay it, and I am ready to diſcuſs the point with temper and candour. But inſtead of approving, I perceive a virtuous indignation beginning to riſe in your minds on the mere cold ſtating of the ſtatute.

But what will you feel, when you know from hiſtory how this ſtatute paſſed, and what were the motives, and what the mode of making it? A party in this nation, enemies to the ſyſtem of the Revolution, were in oppoſition to the government of King

William. They knew, that our glorious deliverer was an enemy to all perſecution. They knew that he came to free us from ſlavery and Popery, out of a country, where a third of the people are contented Catholics under a Proteſtant government. He came with a part of his army compoſed of thoſe very Catholics, to overſet the power of a Popiſh prince. Such is the effect of a tolerating ſpirit; and ſo much is liberty ſerved in every way, and by all perſons, by a manly adherence to its own principles. Whilſt freedom is true to itſelf, every thing becomes ſubject to it; and its very adverſaries are an inſtrument in its hands.

The party I ſpeak of (like ſome amongſt us who would diſparage the beſt friends of their country) reſolved to make the king either violate his principles of toleration, or incur the odium of protecting Papiſts. They therefore brought in this bill, and made it purpoſely wicked and abſurd that it might be rejected. The then court-party, diſcovering their game, turned the tables on them, and returned their bill to them ſtuffed with ſtill greater abſurdities, that its loſs might lie upon its original authors. They, finding their own ball thrown back to them, kicked it back again to their adverſaries. And thus this act, loaded with the double injuſtice

injuſtice of two parties, neither of whom intended to paſs, what they hoped the other would be perſuaded to reject, went through the legiſlature contrary to the real wiſh of all parts of it, and of all the parties that compoſed it. In this manner theſe inſolent and profligate factions, as if they were playing with balls and counters, made a ſport of the fortunes and the liberties of their fellow creatures. Other acts of perſecution have been acts of malice. This was a ſubverſion of juſtice from wantonneſs and petulance. Look into the hiſtory of Biſhop Burnet. He is a witneſs without exception.

The effects of the act have been as miſchievous, as its origin was ludicrous and ſhameful. From that time every perſon of that communion, lay and eccleſiaſtic, has been obliged to fly from the face of day. The clergy, concealed in garrets of private houſes, or obliged to take a ſhelter (hardly ſafe to themſelves, but infinitely dangerous to their country) under the privileges of foreign miniſters, officiated as their ſervants, and under their protection. The whole body of the Catholics, condemned to beggary and to ignorance in their native land, have been obliged to learn the principles of letters, at the hazard of all their other principles, from the charity of your enemies.

enemies. They have been taxed to their ruin at the pleaſure of neceſſitous and profligate relations, and according to the meaſure of their neceſſity and profligacy. Examples of this are many and affecting. Some of them are known by a friend who ſtands near me in this hall. It is but ſix or ſeven years ſince a clergyman of the name of Malony, a man of morals, neither guilty nor accuſed of any thing noxious to the ſtate, was condemned to perpetual impriſonment for exerciſing the functions of his religion; and after lying in jail two or three years, was relieved by the mercy of government from perpetual impriſonment, on condition of perpetual baniſhment. A brother of the Earl of Shrewſbury, a Talbot, a name reſpectable in this county, whilſt its glory is any part of its concern, was hauled to the bar of the Old Bailey among common felons, and only eſcaped the ſame doom, either by ſome error in the proceſs, or that the wretch who brought him there could not directly deſcribe his perſon; I now forget which.—In ſhort, the perſecution would never have relented for a moment, if the judges, ſuperſeding (though with an ambiguous example) the ſtrict rule of their artificial duty by the higher obligation of their conſcience, did not conſtantly throw every difficulty in the way of ſuch informers.

informers. But ſo ineffectual is the power of legal evaſion againſt legal iniquity, that it was but the other day, that a lady of condition, beyond the middle of life, was on the point of being ſtripped of her whole fortune by a near relation, to whom ſhe had been a friend and benefactor: and ſhe muſt have been totally ruined, without a power of redreſs or mitigation from the courts of law, had not the legiſlature itſelf ruſhed in, and by a ſpecial act of Parliament reſcued her from the injuſtice of its own ſtatutes. One of the acts authoriſing ſuch things was that which we in part repealed, knowing what our duty was; and doing that duty as men of honour and virtue, as good Proteſtants, and as good citizens. Let him ſtand forth that diſapproves what we have done!

Gentlemen, Bad laws are the worſt ſort of tyranny. In ſuch a country as this, they are of all bad things the worſt, worſe by far than any where elſe; and they derive a particular malignity even from the wiſdom and ſoundneſs of the reſt of our inſtitutions. For very obvious reaſons you cannot truſt the Crown with a diſpenſing power over any of your laws. However, a government, be it as bad as it may, will, in the exerciſe of a diſcretionary power, diſcriminate

criminate times and perſons; and will not ordinarily purſue any man, when its own ſafety is not concerned. A mercenary informer knows no diſtinction. Under ſuch a ſyſtem, the obnoxious people are ſlaves, not only to the government, but they live at the mercy of every individual; they are at once the ſlaves of the whole community, and of every part of it; and the worſt and moſt unmerciful men are thoſe on whoſe goodneſs they moſt depend.

In this ſituation men not only ſhrink from the frowns of a ſtern magiſtrate; but they are obliged to fly from their very ſpecies. The ſeeds of deſtruction are ſown in civil intercourſe, in ſocial habitudes. The blood of wholeſome kindred is infected. Their tables and beds are ſurrounded with ſnares. All the means given by Providence to make life ſafe and comfortable, are perverted into inſtruments of terror and torment. This ſpecies of univerſal ſubſerviency, that makes the very ſervant who waits behind your chair, the arbiter of your life and fortune, has ſuch a tendency to degrade and debaſe mankind, and to deprive them of that aſſured and liberal ſtate of mind, which alone can make us what we ought to be, that I vow to God I would ſooner bring myſelf to put a man to immediate

diate death for opinions I diſliked, and ſo to get rid of the man and his opinions at once, than to fret him with a feveriſh being, tainted with the jail-diſtemper of a contagious ſervitude, to keep him above ground, an animated maſs of putrefaction, corrupted himſelf, and corrupting all about him.

The act repealed was of this direct tendency; and it was made in the manner which I have related to you. I will now tell you by whom the bill of repeal was brought into Parliament. I find it has been induſtriouſly given out in this city (from kindneſs to me unqueſtionably) that I was the mover or the ſeconder. The fact is, I did not once open my lips on the ſubject during the whole progreſs of the bill. I do not ſay this as diſclaiming my ſhare in that meaſure. Very far from it. I inform you of this fact, leſt I ſhould ſeem to arrogate to myſelf the merits which belong to others. To have been the man choſen out to redeem our fellow-citizens from ſlavery; to purify our laws from abſurdity and injuſtice; and to cleanſe our religion from the blot and ſtain of perſecution, would be an honour and happineſs to which my wiſhes would undoubtedly aſpire; but to which nothing but my wiſhes could poſſibly

bly have entitled me. That great work was in hands in every reſpect far better qualified than mine. The mover of the bill was Sir George Savile.

When an act of great and ſignal humanity was to be done, and done with all the weight and authority that belonged to it, the world could caſt its eyes upon none but him. I hope that few things, which have a tendency to bleſs or to adorn life, have wholly eſcaped my obſervation in my paſſage through it. I have ſought the acquaintance of that gentleman, and have ſeen him in all ſituations. He is a true genius; with an underſtanding vigorous, and acute, and refined, and diſtinguiſhing even to exceſs; and illuminated with a moſt unbounded, peculiar, and original caſt of imagination. With theſe he poſſeſſes many external and inſtrumental advantages; and he makes uſe of them all. His fortune is among the largeſt; a fortune which, wholly unincumbered, as it is, with one ſingle charge from luxury, vanity, or exceſs, ſinks under the benevolence of its diſpenſer. This private benevolence, expanding itſelf into patriotiſm, renders his whole being the eſtate of the public, in which he has not reſerved a *peculium* for himſelf of profit, diverſion, or relaxation. During the ſeſſion, the firſt in,

in, and the laſt out of the Houſe of Commons; he paſſes from the ſenate to the camp; and, ſeldom ſeeing the ſeat of his anceſtors, he is always in Parliament to ſerve his country, or in the field to defend it. But in all well wrought compoſitions, ſome particulars ſtand out more eminently than the reſt; and the things which will carry his name to poſterity, are his two bills; I mean that for a limitation of the claims of the crown upon landed eſtates; and this for the relief of the Roman Catholics. By the former, he has emancipated property; by the latter, he has quieted conſcience; and by both, he has taught that grand leſſon to government and ſubject,—no longer to regard each other as adverſe parties.

Such was the mover of the act that is complained of by men, who are not quite ſo good as he is; an act, moſt aſſuredly not brought in by him from any partiality to that ſect which is the object of it. For, among his faults, I really cannot help reckoning a greater degree of prejudice againſt that people, than becomes ſo wiſe a man. I know that he inclines to a ſort of diſguſt, mixed with a conſiderable degree of aſperity, to the ſyſtem; and he has few, or rather no habits with any of its profeſſors.

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What he has done was on quite other motives. The motives were theſe, which he declared in his excellent ſpeech on his motion for the bill; namely, his extreme zeal to the Proteſtant religion, which he thought utterly diſgraced by the act of 1699; and his rooted hatred to all kind of oppreſſion, under any colour or upon any pretence whatſoever.

The ſeconder was worthy of the mover, and the motion. I was not the ſeconder; it was Mr. Dunning, Recorder of this city. I ſhall ſay the leſs of him, becauſe his near relation to you makes you more particularly acquainted with his merits. But I ſhould appear little acquainted with them, or little ſenſible of them, if I could utter his name on this occaſion without expreſſing my eſteem for his character. I am not afraid of offending a moſt learned body, and moſt jealous of its reputation for that learning, when I ſay he is the firſt of his profeſſion. It is a point ſettled by thoſe who ſettle every thing elſe; and I muſt add (what I am enabled to ſay from my own long and cloſe obſervation) that there is not a man, of any profeſſion, or in any ſituation, of a more erect and independent ſpirit; of a more proud honour; a more manly mind; a more firm and determined integrity. Aſ-

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ſure yourſelves, that the names of two ſuch men will bear a great load of prejudice in the other ſcale, before they can be entirely outweighed.

With this mover, and this ſeconder, agreed the *whole* Houſe of Commons; the *whole* Houſe of Lords; the *whole* Bench of Biſhops; the King; the Miniſtry; the Oppoſition; all the diſtinguiſhed Clergy of the Eſtabliſhment; all the eminent lights (for they were conſulted) of the Diſſenting churches. This according voice of national wiſdom ought to be liſtened to with reverence. To ſay that all theſe deſcriptions of Engliſhmen unanimouſly concurred in a ſcheme for introducing the Catholic religion, or that none of them underſtood the nature and effects of what they were doing, ſo well as a few obſcure clubs of people, whoſe names you never heard of, is ſhameleſsly abſurd. Surely it is paying a miſerable compliment to the religion we profeſs, to ſuggeſt, that every thing eminent in the kingdom is indifferent, or even adverſe to that religion, and that its ſecurity is wholly abandoned to the zeal of thoſe, who have nothing but their zeal to diſtinguiſh them. In weighing this unanimous concurrence of whatever the nation has to boaſt of, I hope you will recollect, that all theſe concurring

parties

parties do by no means love one another enough to agree in any point, which was not both evidently, and importantly, right.

To prove this; to prove, that the meaſure was both clearly and materially proper, I will next lay before you (as I promiſed) the political grounds and reaſons for the repeal of that penal ſtatute; and the motives to its repeal at that particular time.

Gentlemen, America———When the Engliſh nation ſeemed to be dangerouſly, if not irrecoverably divided; when one, and that the moſt growing branch, was torn from the parent ſtock, and engrafted on the power of France, a great terror fell upon this kingdom. On a ſudden we awakened from our dreams of conqueſt, and ſaw ourſelves threatened with an immediate invaſion; which we were, at that time, very ill prepared to reſiſt. You remember the cloud that gloomed over us all. In that hour of our diſmay from the bottom of the hiding-places, into which the indiſcriminate rigour of our ſtatutes had driven them, came out the body of the Roman Catholics. They appeared before the ſteps of a tottering throne, with one of the moſt ſober, meaſured, ſteady, and dutiful addreſſes that was ever preſented to the crown. It was

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no holiday ceremony; no anniverſary compliment of parade and ſhow. It was ſigned by almoſt every gentleman of that perſuaſion, of note or property, in England. At ſuch a criſis, nothing but a decided reſolution to ſtand or fall with their country could have dictated ſuch an addreſs; the direct tendency of which was to cut off all retreat; and to render them peculiarly obnoxious to an invader of their own communion. The addreſs ſhewed, what I long languiſhed to ſee, that all the ſubjects of England had caſt off all foreign views and connexions, and that every man looked for his relief from every grievance, at the hands only of his own natural government.

It was neceſſary, on our part, that the natural government ſhould ſhew itſelf worthy of that name. It was neceſſary, at the criſis I ſpeak of, that the ſupreme power of the ſtate ſhould meet the conciliatory diſpoſitions of the ſubject. To delay protection would be to reject allegiance. And why ſhould it be rejected, or even coldly and ſuſpiciouſly received? If any independent Catholic ſtate ſhould chooſe to take part with this kingdom in a war with France and Spain, that bigot (if ſuch a bigot could be found) would be heard with little reſpect, who could dream of objecting his religion

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to an ally, whom the nation would not only receive with its freeſt thanks, but purchaſe, with the laſt remains of its exhauſted treaſure. To ſuch an ally we ſhould not dare to whiſper a ſingle ſyllable of thoſe baſe and invidious topics, upon which, ſome unhappy men would perſuade the ſtate, to reject the duty and allegiance of its own members. Is it then, becauſe foreigners are in a condition to ſet our malice at defiance, that with *them*, we are willing to contract engagements of friendſhip, and to keep them with fidelity and honour; but that, becauſe we conceive, ſome deſcriptions of our countrymen are not powerful enough to puniſh our malignity, we will not permit them to ſupport our common intereſt? Is it on that ground, that our anger is to be kindled by their offered kindneſs, and that they are to be ſubjected to penalties, becauſe they are willing, by actual merit, to purge themſelves from imputed crimes? Leſt by an adherence to the cauſe of their country they ſhould acquire a title to fair and equitable treatment, are we reſolved to furniſh them with cauſes of eternal enmity; and rather ſupply them with juſt and founded motives to diſaffection, than not to have that diſaffection in exiſtence to juſtify an oppreſſion, which, not from policy but diſpoſition, we have determined to exerciſe?

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What ſhadow of reaſon could be aſſigned, why, at a time, when the moſt Proteſtant part of this Proteſtant empire found it for its advantage to unite with the two principal Popiſh ſtates, to unite itſelf in the cloſeſt bonds with France and Spain, for our deſtruction, that we ſhould refuſe to unite with our own Catholic countrymen for our own preſervation? Ought we, like madmen, to tear off the plaſters, that the lenient hand of prudence had ſpread over the wounds and gaſhes, which in our delirium of ambition we had given to our own body? No perſon ever reprobated the American war more than I did, and do, and ever ſhall. But I never will conſent that we ſhould lay additional voluntary penalties on ourſelves, for a fault which carries but too much of its own puniſhment in its own nature. For one, I was delighted with the propoſal of internal peace. I accepted the bleſſing with thankfulneſs and tranſport; I was truly happy, to find *one* good effect of our civil diſtractions, that they had put an end to all religious ſtrife and heart-burning in our own bowels. What muſt be the ſentiments of a man, who could wiſh to perpetuate domeſtic hoſtility, when the cauſes of diſpute are at an end; and who, crying out for peace with one part of the nation on the moſt humiliating terms, ſhould deny it to

 thoſe,

thoſe, who offer friendſhip without any terms at all?

But if I was unable to reconcile ſuch a denial to the contracted principles of local duty, what anſwer could I give to the broad claims of general humanity? I confeſs to you freely, that the ſufferings and diſtreſſes of the people of America in this cruel war, have at times affected me more deeply than I can expreſs. I felt every Gazette of triumph as a blow upon my heart, which has an hundred times ſunk and fainted within me at all the miſchiefs brought upon thoſe who bear the whole brunt of war in the heart of their country. Yet the Americans are utter ſtrangers to me; a nation, among whom I am not ſure, that I have a ſingle acquaintance. Was I to ſuffer my mind to be ſo unaccountably warped; was I to keep ſuch iniquitous weights and meaſures of temper and of reaſon, as to ſympathiſe with thoſe who are in open rebellion againſt an authority which I reſpect, at war with a country which by every title ought to be, and is moſt dear to me; and yet to have no feeling at all for the hardſhips and indignities ſuffered by men, who, by their very vicinity, are bound up in a nearer relation to us; who contribute their ſhare, and more than their ſhare, to the common proſperity;

perity; who perform the common offices of ſocial life, and who obey the laws to the full as well as I do? Gentlemen, the danger to the ſtate being out of the queſtion (of which, let me tell you, ſtateſmen themſelves are apt to have but too exquiſite a ſenſe) I could aſſign no one reaſon of juſtice, policy, or feeling, for not concurring moſt cordially, as moſt cordially I did concur, in ſoftening ſome part of that ſhameful ſervitude, under which ſeveral of my worthy fellow-citizens were groaning.

Important effects followed this act of wiſdom. They appeared at home and abroad, to the great benefit of this kingdom; and, let me hope, to the advantage of mankind at large. It betokened union among ourſelves. It ſhewed ſoundneſs, even on the part of the perſecuted, which generally is the weak ſide of every community. But its moſt eſſential operation was not in England. The act was immediately, though very imperfectly, copied in Ireland; and this imperfect tranſcript of an imperfect act, this firſt faint ſketch of toleration, which did little more than diſcloſe a principle, and mark out a diſpoſition, completed in a moſt wonderful manner the re-union to the ſtate, of all the Catholics of that country. It made us, what we ought always to have

been, one family, one body, one heart and ſoul, againſt the family-combination, and all other combinations of our enemies. We have indeed obligations to that people, who received ſuch ſmall benefits with ſo much gratitude; and for which gratitude and attachment to us, I am afraid they have ſuffered not a little in other places.

I dare ſay, you have all heard of the privileges indulged to the Iriſh Catholics reſiding in Spain. You have likewiſe heard with what circumſtances of ſeverity they have been lately expelled from the ſea-ports of that kingdom; driven into the inland cities; and there detained as a ſort of priſoners of ſtate. I have good reaſon to believe, that it was the zeal to our government and our cauſe, (ſomewhat indiſcreetly expreſſed in one of the addreſſes of the Catholics of Ireland) which has thus drawn down on their heads the indignation of the Court of Madrid; to the inexpreſſible loſs of ſeveral individuals, and in future, perhaps, to the great detriment of the whole of their body. Now that our people ſhould be perſecuted in Spain for their attachment to this country, and perſecuted in this country for their ſuppoſed enmity to us, in ſuch a jarring reconciliation of contradictory diſtreſſes, is a thing at once

once ſo dreadful and ridiculous, that no malice ſhort of diabolical, would wiſh to continue any human creatures in ſuch a ſituation. But honeſt men will not forget either their merit or their ſufferings. There are men, (and many, I truſt, there are) who, out of love to their country and their king, would torture their invention to find excuſes for the miſtakes of their brethren; and who, to ſtifle diſſenſion, would conſtrue, even doubtful appearances, with the utmoſt favour: ſuch men will never perſuade themſelves to be ingenious and refined in diſcovering diſaffection and treaſon in the manifeſt palpable ſigns of ſuffering loyalty. Perſecution is ſo unnatural to them, that they gladly ſnatch the very firſt opportunity of laying aſide all the tricks and devices of penal politics; and of returning home, after all their irkſome and vexatious wanderings, to our natural family manſion, to the grand ſocial principle, that unites all men, in all deſcriptions, under the ſhadow of an equal and impartial juſtice.

Men of another ſort, I mean the bigotted enemies to liberty, may, perhaps, in their politics, make no account of the good or ill affection of the Catholics of England, who are but an handful of people (enough to torment, but not enough to fear) perhaps not

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ſo many, of both ſexes and of all ages, as fifty thouſand. But, Gentlemen, it is poſſible you may not know, that the people of that perſuaſion in Ireland, amount at leaſt to ſixteen or ſeventeen hundred thouſand ſouls. I do not at all exaggerate the number. A *nation* to be perſecuted! Whilſt we were maſters of the ſea, embodied with America, and in alliance with half the powers of the continent, we might perhaps, in that remote corner of Europe, afford to tyranniſe with impunity. But there is a revolution in our affairs, which makes it prudent to be juſt. In our late awkward conteſt with Ireland about trade, had religion been thrown in, to ferment and embitter the maſs of diſcontents, the conſequences might have been truly dreadful. But very happily, that cauſe of quarrel was previouſly quieted by the wiſdom of the acts I am commending.

Even in England, where I admit the danger from the diſcontent of that perſuaſion to be leſs than in Ireland; yet even here, had we liſtened to the counſels of Fanaticiſm and Folly, we might have wounded ourſelves very deeply; and wounded ourſelves in a very tender part. You are appriſed, that the Catholics of England conſiſt moſtly of your beſt manufacturers. Had the legiſlature

legiſlature choſen, inſtead of returning their declarations of duty with correſpondent good-will, to drive them to deſpair, there is a country at their very door, to which they would be invited; a country in all reſpects as good as ours, and with the fineſt cities in the world ready built to receive them. And thus the bigotry of a free country, and in an enlightened age, would have repeopled the cities of Flanders, which, in the darkneſs of two hundred years ago, had been deſolated by the ſuperſtition of a cruel tyrant. Our manufactures were the growth of the perſecutions in the Low Countries. What a ſpectacle would it be to Europe, to ſee us at this time of day, balancing the account of tyranny with thoſe very countries, and by our perſecutions, driving back Trade and Manufacture, as a ſort of vagabonds, to their original ſettlement! But I truſt we ſhall be ſaved this laſt of diſgraces.

So far as to the effect of the act on the intereſts of this nation. With regard to the intereſts of mankind at large, I am ſure the benefit was very conſiderable. Long before this act, indeed, the ſpirit of toleration began to gain ground in Europe. In Holland, the third part of the people are Catholics; they live at eaſe; and are a

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ſound part of the ſtate. In many parts of Germany, Proteſtants and Papiſts partake the ſame cities, the ſame councils, and even the ſame churches. The unbounded liberality of the king of Pruſſia's conduct on this occaſion is known to all the world; and it is of a piece with the other grand maxims of his reign. The magnanimity of the Imperial Court, breaking through the narrow principles of its predeceſſors, has indulged its Proteſtant ſubjects, not only with property, with worſhip, with liberal education; but with honours and truſts, both civil and military. A worthy Proteſtant gentleman of this country now fills, and fills with credit, an high office in the Auſtrian Netherlands. Even the Lutheran obſtinacy of Sweden has thawed at length, and opened a toleration to all religions. I know myſelf, that in France the Proteſtants begin to be at reſt. The army, which in that country is every thing, is open to them; and ſome of the military rewards and decorations which the laws deny, are ſupplied by others, to make the ſervice acceptable and honourable. The firſt miniſter of finance in that country, is a Proteſtant. Two years war without a tax, is among the firſt-fruits of their liberality. Tarniſhed as the glory of this nation

tion is, and far as it has waded into the ſhades of an eclipſe, ſome beams of its former illumination ſtill play upon its ſurface; and what is done in England, is ſtill looked to, as argument, and as example. It is certainly true, that no law of this country ever met with ſuch univerſal applauſe abroad, or was ſo likely to produce the perfection of that tolerating ſpirit, which, as I obſerved, has been long gaining ground in Europe; for abroad, it was univerſally thought we had done, what, I am ſorry to ſay, we had not; they thought we had granted a full toleration. That opinion was however ſo far from hurting the Proteſtant cauſe, that I declare, with the moſt ſerious ſolemnity, my firm belief, that no one thing done for theſe fifty years paſt, was ſo likely to prove deeply beneficial to our religion at large as Sir George Savile's act. In its effects it was, "an act "for tolerating and protecting Proteſtantiſm "throughout Europe:" and I hope, that thoſe who were taking ſteps for the quiet and ſettlement of our Proteſtant brethren in other countries, will even yet, rather conſider the ſteady equity of the greater and better part of the people of Great Britain, than the vanity and violence of a few.

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I perceive, Gentlemen, by the manner of all about me, that you look with horror on the wicked clamour which has been raiſed on this ſubject; and that inſtead of an apology for what was done, you rather demand from me an account, why the execution of the ſcheme of toleration, was not made more anſwerable to the large and liberal grounds on which it was taken up. The queſtion is natural and proper; and I remember that a great and learned magiſtrate *, diſtinguiſhed for his ſtrong and ſyſtematic underſtanding, and who at that time was a member of the Houſe of Commons, made the ſame objection to the proceeding. The ſtatutes, as they now ſtand, are, without doubt, perfectly abſurd. But I beg leave to explain the cauſe of this groſs imperfection, in the tolerating plan, as well and as ſhortly as I am able. It was univerſally thought, that the ſeſſion ought not to paſs over without doing *ſomething* in this buſineſs. To reviſe the whole body of the penal ſtatutes was conceived to be an object too big for the time. The penal ſtatute therefore which was choſen for repeal (choſen to ſhew our diſpoſition to conciliate, not to perfect a toleration) was this

* The Chancellor.

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act of ludicrous cruelty, of which I have juſt given you the hiſtory. It is an act, which, though not by a great deal ſo fierce and bloody as ſome of the reſt, was infinitely more ready in the execution. It was the act which gave the greateſt encouragement to thoſe peſts of ſociety, mercenary informers, and intereſted diſturbers of houſhold peace; and it was obſerved with truth, that the proſecutions, either carried to conviction or compounded, for many years, had been all commenced upon that act. It was ſaid, that whilſt we were deliberating on a more perfect ſcheme, the ſpirit of the age would never come up to the execution of the ſtatutes which remained; eſpecially as more ſteps, and a co-operation of more minds and powers, were required towards a miſchievous uſe of them, than for the execution of the act to be repealed: that it was better to unravel this texture from below than from above, beginning with the lateſt, which, in general practice, is the ſevereſt evil. It was alleged, that this ſlow proceeding would be attended with the advantage of a progreſſive experience; and that the people would grow reconciled to toleration, when they ſhould find by the effects, that juſtice was not ſo irreconcileable an enemy to convenience as they had imagined.

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Theſe, Gentlemen, were the reaſons why we left this good work in the rude unfiniſhed ſtate, in which good works are commonly left, through the tame circumſpection with which a timid prudence ſo frequently enervates beneficence. In doing good, we are generally cold, and languid, and ſluggiſh; and of all things afraid of being too much in the right. But the works of malice and injuſtice are quite in another ſtyle. They are finiſhed with a bold maſterly hand; touched as they are with the ſpirit of thoſe vehement paſſions that call forth all our energies whenever we oppreſs and perſecute.

Thus this matter was left for the time, with a full determination in Parliament, not to ſuffer other and worſe ſtatutes to remain for the purpoſe of counteracting the benefits propoſed by the repeal of one penal law; for nobody then dreamed of defending what was done as a benefit, on the ground of its being no benefit at all. We were not then ripe for ſo mean a ſubterfuge.

I do not wiſh to go over the horrid ſcene that was afterwards acted. Would to God it could be expunged for ever from the annals of this country! But ſince it muſt ſubſiſt

ſubſiſt for our ſhame, let it ſubſiſt for our inſtruction. In the year 1780 there were found in this nation men deluded enough (for I give the whole to their deluſion) on pretences of zeal and piety, without any ſort of provocation whatſoever, real or pretended, to make a deſperate attempt, which would have conſumed all the glory and power of this country in the flames of London; and buried all law, order, and religion, under the ruins of the metropolis of the Proteſtant world. Whether all this miſchief done, or in the direct train of doing, was in their original ſcheme, I cannot ſay; I hope it was not; but this would have been the unavoidable conſequence of their proceedings, had not the flames they had lighted up in their fury been extinguiſhed in their blood.

All the time that this horrid ſcene was acting, or avenging, as well as for ſome time before, and ever ſince, the wicked inſtigators of this unhappy multitude, guilty, with every aggravation, of all their crimes, and ſcreened in a cowardly darkneſs from their puniſhment, continued, without interruption, pity, or remorſe, to blow up the blind rage of the populace, with a continued blaſt of peſtilential libels, which

which infected and poiſoned the very air we breathed in.

The main drift of all the libels, and all the riots, was, to force Parliament (to perſuade us was hopeleſs) into an act of national perfidy, which has no example. For, Gentlemen, it is proper you ſhould all know what infamy we eſcaped by refuſing that repeal, for a refuſal of which, it ſeems, I, among others, ſtand ſomewhere or other accuſed. When we took away, on the motives which I had the honour of ſtating to you, a few of the innumerable penalties upon an oppreſſed and injured people, the relief was not abſolute, but given on a ſtipulation and compact between them and us; for we bound down the Roman Catholics with the moſt ſolemn oaths, to bear true allegiance to this government; to abjure all ſorts of temporal power in any other; and to renounce under the ſame ſolemn obligations, the doctrines of ſyſtematic perfidy, with which they ſtood (I conceive very unjuſtly) charged. Now our modeſt petitioners came up to us, moſt humbly praying nothing more, than that we ſhould break our faith without any one cauſe whatſoever of forfeiture aſſigned; and when the ſubjects of this kingdom had, on their part, fully perform-

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ed their engagement, we ſhould refuſe, on our part, the benefit we had ſtipulated on the performance of thoſe very conditions that were preſcribed by our own authority, and taken on the ſanction of our public faith—That is to ſay, when we had inveigled them with fair promiſes within our door, we were to ſhut it on them; and, adding mockery to outrage—to tell them, "Now we have got you faſt "—your conſciences are bound to a pow- "er reſolved on your deſtruction. We "have made you ſwear, that your reli- "gion obliges you to keep your faith; "fools as you are! we will now let you "ſee, that our religion enjoins us to keep "no faith with you." They who would adviſedly call upon us to do ſuch things, muſt certainly have thought us not only a convention of treacherous tyrants, but a gang of the loweſt and dirtieſt wretches that ever diſgraced humanity. Had we done this, we ſhould have indeed proved, that there were *ſome* in the world whom no faith could bind; and we ſhould have *convicted* ourſelves of that odious principle of which Papiſts ſtood *accuſed* by thoſe very ſavages, who wiſhed us, on that accuſation, to deliver them over to their fury.

In

In this audacious tumult, when our very name and character, as gentlemen, was to be cancelled for ever along with the faith and honour of the nation, I, who had exerted myſelf very little on the quiet paſſing of the bill, thought it neceſſary then to come forward. I was not alone; but though ſome diſtinguiſhed members on all ſides, and particularly on ours, added much to their high reputation by the part they took on that day, (a part which will be remembered as long as honour, ſpirit, and eloquence have eſtimation in the world) I may and will value myſelf ſo far, that yielding in abilities to many, I yielded in zeal to none. With warmth, and with vigour, and animated with a juſt and natural indignation, I called forth every faculty that I poſſeſſed, and I directed it in every way which I could poſſibly employ it. I laboured night and day. I laboured in Parliament: I laboured out of Parliament. If therefore the reſolution of the Houſe of Commons, refuſing to commit this act of unmatched turpitude, be a crime, I am guilty among the foremoſt. But indeed, whatever the faults of that Houſe may have been, no one member was found hardy enough to propoſe ſo infamous a thing; and on full debate we paſſed the reſolution againſt the petitions with as much

much unanimity, as we had formerly paſſed the law of which theſe petitions demanded the repeal.

There was a circumſtance (juſtice will not ſuffer me to paſs it over) which, if any thing could enforce the reaſons I have given, would fully juſtify the act of relief, and render a repeal, or any thing like a repeal, unnatural, impoſſible. It was the behaviour of the perſecuted Roman Catholics under the acts of violence and brutal inſolence, which they ſuffered. I ſuppoſe there are not in London leſs than four or five thouſand of that perſuaſion from my country, who do a great deal of the moſt laborious works in the metropolis; and they chiefly inhabit thoſe quarters, which were the principal theatre of the fury of the bigotted multitude. They are known to be men of ſtrong arms, and quick feelings, and more remarkable for a determined reſolution, than clear ideas, or much foreſight. But though provoked by every thing that can ſtir the blood of men, their houſes and chapels in flames, and with the moſt atrocious profanations of every thing which they hold ſacred before their eyes, not a hand was moved to retaliate, or even to defend. Had a conflict once begun, the rage of their perſecutors would have redoubled. Thus fury

encreaſing by the reverberation of outrages, houſe being fired for houſe, and church for chapel, I am convinced, that no power under heaven could have prevented a general conflagration; and at this day London would have been a tale. But I am well informed, and the thing ſpeaks it, that their clergy exerted their whole influence to keep their people in ſuch a ſtate of forbearance and quiet, as, when I look back, fills me with aſtoniſhment; but not with aſtoniſhment only. Their merits on that occaſion ought not to be forgotten; nor will they, when Engliſhmen come to recollect themſelves. I am ſure it were far more proper to have called them forth, and given them the thanks of both Houſes of Parliament, than to have ſuffered thoſe worthy clergymen, and excellent citizens, to be hunted into holes and corners, whilſt we are making low-minded inquiſitions into the number of their people; as if a tolerating principle was never to prevail, unleſs we were very ſure that only a few could poſſibly take advantage of it. But indeed we are not yet well recovered of our fright. Our reaſon, I truſt, will return with our ſecurity; and this unfortunate temper will paſs over like a cloud.

Gentlemen, I have now laid before you a few of the reaſons for taking away the penalties

penalties of the act of 1699, and for refuſing to eſtabliſh them on the riotous requiſition of 1780. Becauſe I would not ſuffer any thing which may be for your ſatisfaction to eſcape, permit me juſt to touch on the objections urged againſt our act and our reſolves, and intended as a juſtification of the violence offered to both Houſes. "Parliament," they aſſert, "was "too haſty, and they ought, in ſo eſſen- "tial and alarming a change, to have pro- "ceeded with a far greater degree of de- "liberation." The direct contrary. Parliament was too ſlow. They took fourſcore years to deliberate on the repeal of an act which ought not to have ſurvived a ſecond ſeſſion. When at length, after a procraſtination of near a century, the buſineſs was taken up, it proceeded in the moſt public manner, by the ordinary ſtages, and as ſlowly as a law ſo evidently right as to be reſiſted by none, would naturally advance. Had it been read three times in one day, we ſhould have ſhewn only a becoming readineſs to recogniſe by protection the undoubted dutiful behaviour of thoſe whom we had but too long puniſhed for offences of preſumption or conjecture. But for what end was that bill to linger beyond the uſual period of an unoppoſed meaſure? Was it to be delayed until a rabble in Edinburgh ſhould dictate

to the Church of England what meaſure of perſecution was fitting for her ſafety? Was it to be adjourned until a fanatical force could be collected in London, ſufficient to frighten us out of all our ideas of policy and juſtice? Were we to wait for the profound lectures on the reaſon of ſtate, eccleſiaſtical and political, which the Proteſtant Aſſociation have ſince condeſcended to read to us? Or were we, ſeven hundred Peers and Commoners, the only perſons ignorant of the ribald invectives which occupy the place of argument in thoſe remonſtrances, which every man of common obſervation had heard a thouſand times over, and a thouſand times over had deſpiſed? All men had before heard what they have to ſay; and all men at this day know what they dare to do; and I truſt, all honeſt men are equally influenced by the one, and by the other.

But they tell us, that thoſe our fellow-citizens, whoſe chains we have a little relaxed, are enemies to liberty and our free conſtitution.—Not enemies, I preſume, to their *own* liberty. And as to the conſtitution, until we give them ſome ſhare in it, I do not know on what pretence we can examine into their opinions about a buſineſs in which they have no intereſt or concern. But after all, are we equally ſure,

ſure, that they are averſe to our conſtitution, as that our ſtatutes are hoſtile and deſtructive to them? For my part, I have reaſon to believe, their opinions and inclinations in that reſpect are various, exactly like thoſe of other men; and if they lean more to the Crown than I, and than many of you think *we* ought, we muſt remember, that he who aims at another's life, is not to be ſurpriſed if he flies into any ſanctuary that will receive him. The tenderneſs of the executive power is the natural aſylum of thoſe upon whom the laws have declared war; and to complain that men are inclined to favour the means of their own ſafety, is ſo abſurd, that one forgets the injuſtice in the ridicule.

I muſt fairly tell you, that ſo far as my principles are concerned, (principles, that I hope will only depart with my laſt breath) that I have no idea of a liberty unconnected with honeſty and juſtice. Nor do I believe, that any good conſtitutions of government or of freedom, can find it neceſſary for their ſecurity to doom any part of the people to a permanent ſlavery. Such a conſtitution of freedom, if ſuch can be, is in effect no more than another name for the tyranny of the ſtrongeſt faction; and factions in republics have been, and are, full as capable as monarchs, of the moſt

cruel

cruel oppreſſion and injuſtice. It is but too true, that the love, and even the very idea, of genuine liberty, is extremely rare. It is but too true, that there are many, whoſe whole ſcheme of freedom, is made up of pride, perverſeneſs, and inſolence. They feel themſelves in a ſtate of thraldom, they imagine that their ſouls are cooped and cabined in, unleſs they have ſome man, or ſome body of men, dependent on their mercy. This deſire of having ſome one below them, deſcends to thoſe who are the very loweſt of all,—and a Proteſtant cobbler, debaſed by his poverty, but exalted by his ſhare of the ruling church, feels a pride in knowing, it is by his generoſity alone, that the peer, whoſe footman's inſtep he meaſures, is able to keep his chaplain from a jail. This diſpoſition is the true ſource of the paſſion, which many men in very humble life, have taken to the American war. *Our* ſubjects in America; *our* colonies; *our* dependants. This luſt of party-power, is the liberty they hunger and thirſt for; and this Syren ſong of ambition, has charmed ears, that one would have thought were never organiſed to that ſort of muſic.

This way, of *proſcribing the citizens by denominations and general deſcriptions*, dignified by the name of reaſon of ſtate, and ſecurity for conſtitutions and commonwealths,

wealths, is nothing better at bottom, than the miſerable invention of an ungenerous ambition, which would fain hold the ſacred truſt of power, without any of the virtues or any of the energies, that give a title to it; a receipt of policy, made up of a deteſtable compound of malice, cowardice, and ſloth. They would govern men againſt their will; but in that government they would be diſcharged from the exerciſe of vigilance, providence, and fortitude; and therefore, that they may ſleep on their watch, they conſent to take ſome one diviſion of the ſociety into partnerſhip of the tyranny over the reſt. But let government, in what form it may be, comprehend the whole in its juſtice, and reſtrain the ſuſpicious by its vigilance; let it keep watch and ward; let it diſcover by its ſagacity, and puniſh by its firmneſs, all delinquency againſt its power, whenever delinquency exiſts in the overt acts; and then it will be as ſafe as ever God and nature intended it ſhould be. Crimes are the acts of individuals, and not of denominations; and therefore arbitrarily to claſs men under general deſcriptions, in order to proſcribe and puniſh them in the lump for a preſumed delinquency, of which perhaps but a part, perhaps none at all, are guilty, is indeed a compendious method, and ſaves a world of trouble about proof; but

but ſuch a method, inſtead of being law, is an act of unnatural rebellion againſt the legal dominion of reaſon and juſtice; and this vice, in any conſtitution that entertains it, at one time or other will certainly bring on its ruin.

We are told, that this is not a religious perſecution, and its abettors are loud in diſclaiming all ſeverities on account of conſcience. Very fine indeed! then let it be ſo; they are not perſecutors; they are only tyrants. With all my heart. I am perfectly indifferent concerning the pretexts upon which we torment one another; or whether it be for the conſtitution of the Church of England, or for the conſtitution of the State of England, that people chooſe to make their fellow-creatures wretched. When we were ſent into a place of authority, you that ſent us had yourſelves but one commiſſion to give. You could give us none to wrong or oppreſs, or even to ſuffer any kind of oppreſſion or wrong, on any grounds whatſoever; not on political, as in the affairs of America; not on commercial, as in thoſe of Ireland; not in civil, as in the laws for debt; not in religious, as in the ſtatutes againſt Proteſtant or Catholic Diſſenters. The diverſified but connected fabric of univerſal juſtice, is well cramped and bolted together in all

all its parts; and depend upon it, I never have employed, and I never ſhall employ, any engine of power which may come into my hands, to wrench it aſunder. All ſhall ſtand, if I can help it, and all ſhall ſtand connected. After all, to complete this work, much remains to be done; much in the Eaſt, much in the Weſt. But great as the work is, if our will be ready, our powers are not deficient.

Since you have ſuffered me to trouble you ſo much on this ſubject, permit me, Gentlemen, to detain you a little longer. I am indeed moſt ſolicitous to give you perfect ſatisfaction. I find there are ſome of a better and ſofter nature than the perſons with whom I have ſuppoſed myſelf in debate, who neither think ill of the act of relief, nor by any means deſire the repeal, not accuſing but lamenting what was done, on account of the conſequences, have frequently expreſſed their wiſh, that the late act had never been made. Some of this deſcription, and perſons of worth, I have met with in this city. They conceive, that the prejudices, whatever they might be, of a large part of the people, ought not to have been ſhocked; that their opinions ought to have been previouſly taken, and much attended to; and that thereby the late horrid ſcenes might have been prevented.

I confeſs

I confeſs my notions are widely different; and I never was leſs ſorry for any action of my life. I like the bill the better, on account of the events of all kinds that followed it. It relieved the real ſufferers; it ſtrengthened the ſtate; and, by the diſorders that enſued, we had clear evidence, that there lurked a temper ſomewhere, which ought not to be foſtered by the laws. No ill conſequences whatever could be attributed to the act itſelf. We knew beforehand, or we were poorly inſtructed, that toleration is odious to the intolerant; freedom to oppreſſors; property to robbers; and all kinds and degrees of proſperity to the envious. We knew, that all theſe kinds of men would gladly gratify their evil diſpoſitions under the ſanction of law and religion, if they could: if they could not, yet, to make way to their objects, they would do their utmoſt to ſubvert all religion and all law. This we certainly knew. But knowing this, is there any reaſon, becauſe thieves break in and ſteal, and thus bring detriment to you, and draw ruin on themſelves, that I am to be ſorry that you are in poſſeſſion of ſhops, and of warehouſes, and of wholeſome laws to protect them? Are you to build no houſes, becauſe deſperate men may pull them down upon their own heads? Or, if a malignant wretch will cut his own throat, becauſe he ſees you give alms to the neceſſitous and deſerving;

ſerving; ſhall his deſtruction be attributed to your charity, and not to his own deplorable madneſs? If we repent of our good actions, what, I pray you, is left for our faults and follies? It is not the beneficence of the laws, it is the unnatural temper which beneficence can fret and ſour, that is to be lamented. It is this temper which, by all rational means, ought to be ſweetened and corrected. If froward men ſhould refuſe this cure, can they vitiate any thing but themſelves? Does evil ſo react upon good, as not only to retard its motion, but to change its nature? If it can ſo operate, then good men will always be in the power of the bad; and virtue, by a dreadful reverſe of order, muſt lie under perpetual ſubjection and bondage to vice.

As to the opinion of the people, which ſome think, in ſuch caſes, is to be implicitly obeyed; near two years tranquillity, which followed the act, and its inſtant imitation in Ireland, proved abundantly, that the late horrible ſpirit was, in a great meaſure, the effect of inſidious art, and perverſe induſtry, and groſs miſrepreſentation. But ſuppoſe that the diſlike had been much more deliberate, and much more general than I am perſuaded it was—When we know, that the opinions of even the greateſt multitudes, are the ſtandard of rectitude, I ſhall think myſelf obliged

obliged to make thoſe opinions the maſters of my conſcience. But if it may be doubted whether Omnipotence itſelf is competent to alter the eſſential conſtitution of right and wrong, ſure I am, that ſuch *things*, as they and I, are poſſeſſed of no ſuch power. No man carries further than I do the policy of making government pleaſing to the people. But the wideſt range of this politic complaiſance is confined within the limits of juſtice. I would not only conſult the intereſt of the people, but I would chearfully gratify their humours. We are all a ſort of children, that muſt be ſoothed and managed. I think I am not auſtere nor formal in my nature. I would bear, I would even myſelf play my part in, any innocent buffooneries, to divert them. But I never will act the tyrant for their amuſement. If they will mix malice in their ſports, I ſhall never conſent to throw them any living, ſentient creature whatſoever, no not ſo much as a kitling, to torment.

" But if I profeſs all this impolitic ſtub-
" bornneſs, I may chance never to be elected
" into Parliament." It is certainly not pleaſing to be put out of the public ſervice. But I wiſh to be a member of Parliament, to have my ſhare of doing good, and reſiſting evil. It would therefore be abſurd to renounce my objects, in order to obtain my ſeat. I deceive myſelf indeed moſt groſsly, if I had not much

much rather paſs the remainder of my life hidden in the receſſes of the deepeſt obſcurity, feeding my mind even with the viſions and imaginations of ſuch things, than to be placed on the moſt ſplendid throne of the univerſe, tantalized with a denial of the practice of all which can make the greateſt ſituation any other than the greateſt curſe. Gentlemen, I have had my day. I can never ſufficiently expreſs my gratitude to you, for having ſet me in a place, wherein I could lend the ſlighteſt help to great and laudable deſigns. If I have had my ſhare, in any meaſure giving quiet to private property, and private conſcience; if by my vote I have aided in ſecuring to families the beſt poſſeſſion, peace; if I have joined in reconciling kings to their ſubjects, and ſubjects to their prince; if I have aſſiſted to looſen the foreign holdings of the citizen, and taught him to look for his protection to the laws of his country, and for his comfort to the goodwill of his countrymen;—if I have thus taken my part with the beſt of men in the beſt of their actions, I can ſhut the book;—I might wiſh to read a page or two more—but this is enough for my meaſure.—I have not lived in vain.

And now, Gentlemen, on this ſerious day, when I come, as it were, to make up my account with you, let me take to myſelf ſome degree

degree of honeſt pride on the nature of the charges that are againſt me. I do not here ſtand before you accuſed of venality, or of neglect of duty. It is not ſaid, that, in the long period of my ſervice, I have, in a ſingle inſtance, ſacrificed the ſlighteſt of your intereſts to my ambition, or to my fortune. It is not alleged, that to gratify any anger, or revenge of my own, or of my party, I have had a ſhare in wronging or oppreſſing any deſcription of men, or any one man in any deſcription. No! the charges againſt me, are all of one kind, that I have puſhed the principles of general juſtice and benevolence too far; further than a cautious policy would warrant; and further than the opinions of many would go along with me.—In every accident which may happen through life, in pain, in ſorrow, in depreſſion, and diſtreſs, I will call to mind this accuſation; and be comforted.

Gentlemen, I ſubmit the whole to your judgment. Mr. Mayor, I thank you for the trouble you have taken on this occaſion. In your ſtate of health, it is particularly obliging. If this company ſhould think it adviſeable for me to withdraw, I ſhall reſpectfully retire; if you think otherwiſe, I ſhall go directly to the Council-houſe and to the Change, and without a moment's delay, begin my canvaſs.

THE END.

Briſtol, Sept. 6, 1780.

AT a great and reſpectable Meeting of the Friends of EDMUND BURKE, *Eſq; held at the Guildhall this day;*

The Right Worſhipful the Mayor in the Chair;

Reſolved, that Mr. Burke, as a repreſentative for this city, has done all poſſible honour to himſelf as a ſenator and a man, and that we do heartily and honeſtly approve of his conduct, as the reſult of an enlightened loyalty to his ſovereign; a warm and zealous love to his country, through its widely-extended empire; a jealous and watchful care of the liberties of his fellow ſubjects; an enlarged and liberal underſtanding of our commercial intereſt; a humane attention to the circumſtances of even the loweſt ranks of the community; and a truly wiſe, politic, and tolerant ſpirit, in ſupporting the national church, with a reaſonable indulgence to all who diſſent from it; and we wiſh to expreſs the moſt marked abhorrence of the baſe arts which have been employed, without regard to truth and reaſon, to miſrepreſent his eminent ſervices to his country.

Reſolved, That this reſolution be copied out, and ſigned by the Chairman, and be by him preſented

preſented to Mr. Burke, as the fulleſt expreſſion of the reſpectful and grateful ſenſe we entertain of his merits and ſervices, public and private, to the Citizens of Briſtol, as a man and a repreſentative.

Reſolved, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Right Worſhipful the Mayor, who ſo ably and worthily preſided in this Meeting.

Reſolved, That it is the earneſt requeſt of this Meeting to Mr. Burke, that he ſhould again offer himſelf a candidate to repreſent this city in Parliament; aſſuring him of that full and ſtrenuous ſupport which is due to the merits of ſo excellent a repreſentative.

This buſineſs being over, Mr. Burke went to the Exchange, and offered himſelf as a candidate in the uſual manner. He was accompanied to the Council-houſe, and from thence to the Exchange, by a large body of moſt reſpectable Gentlemen, amongſt whom were the following Members of the Corporation, viz. Mr. Mayor, Mr. Alderman Smith, Mr. Alderman Deane, Mr. Alderman Gordon, William Weare, Samuel Munckly, John Merlott, John Crofts, Levy Ames, John Fiſher Weare, Benjamin Loſcombe, Philip Protheroe, Samuel Span, Joſeph Smith, Richard Bright, and John Noble, Eſquires.